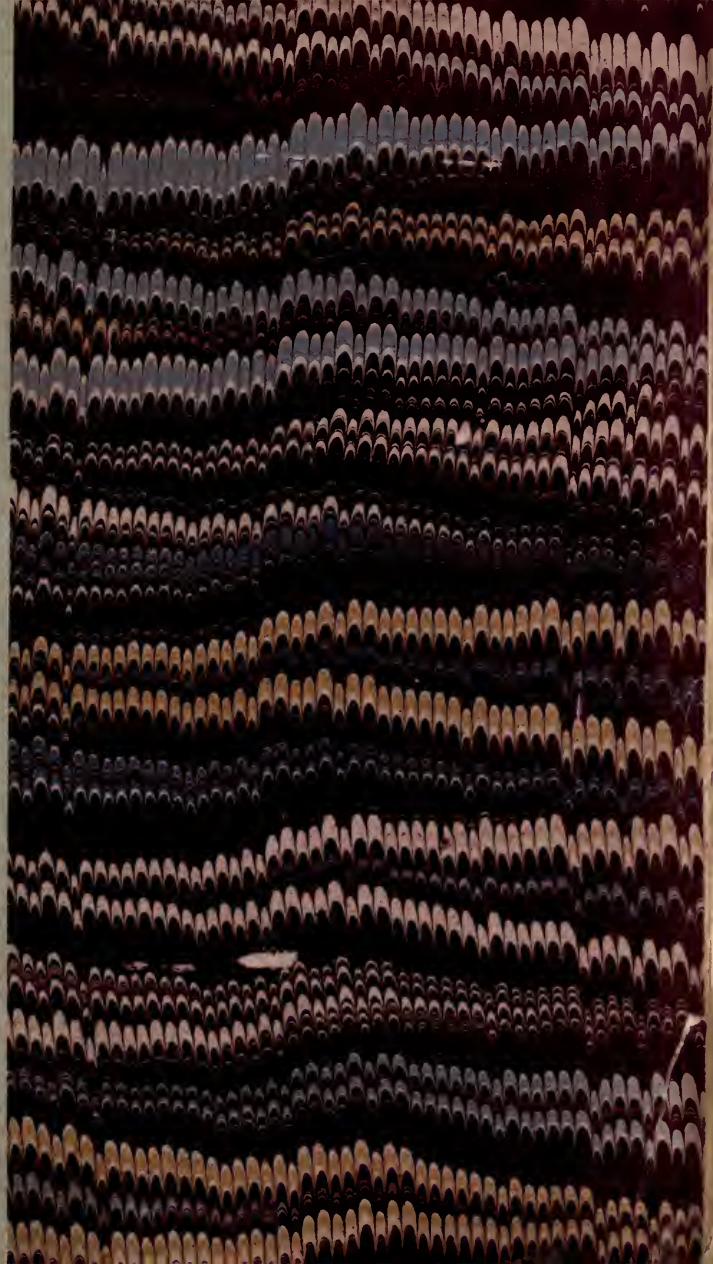


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22



Charlotte delivering the Pistols
to Werthers Servant.

*The Letters of
Charlotte
During her connexion with
Werter.*



Werter found Dead by his Servant.

(London.)

Printed for T. H. Kelsey, 10. Kenton St. Brunswick Sq.

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LETTERS
OF
CHARLOTTE,
DURING HER CONNEXION
WITH
WERTER.

A NEW EDITION.

~~~~~  
"Grazia sola di su ne vaglia, inanti  
Che piu 'l desio d' amore al cor s'invocchi."  
~~~~~

LONDON:

Printed by T. Gillet, Crown-court, Fleet-street;

FOR J. BOUNDEN, 19, MORTIMER-STREET, CAVENDISH-
SQUARE; T. KELSEY, 10, KENTON-STREET;
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BROMLEY, KENT; AND SOLD
BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1810.

P R E F A C E.

I AM happy that in presenting the following letters to the public, I am not exhibiting scenes, or communicating opinions, that can wound delicacy, or pervert sentiment. And though I too well know, that to avoid licentious description, and to reject fashionable ideas, is to wander far from the road that leads to wealth and fame in the literary world, yet I am not willing to acquire either one or the other at the expense of my reader's happiness. If amusement only is to be found in the *Letters of Charlotte*, it will at least be innocent amusement. If opinions are advanced which may appear uncommon, they will not be found to militate against the precepts of religion. If the mind of the reader is not expanded by additional knowledge, it will not be contracted by the subtleties of scepticism.

Whether these negative recommendations will carry any weight, I know not; but I am sorry to find any book published, in favour of which even these cannot be advanced; and I am still more sorry that a book so universally read as the *Sorrows of Werter*, should fall under this predicament; a book which is not simply an apology for the horrible crime of Suicide, but in which, as far as the author's abilities would go, it is justified and recommended!

In the Preface to the *Sorrows of Werter*, we are told, that the author had been called the apologist of Suicide, "by those who absurdly ascribed to him the erroneous sentiments which he has given to his principal character." Here seems to be a distinction without a difference. If the author gave his hero those sentiments, surely they are his own;

and if they are erroneous, be whose they will, why are they published without their antidote?—As a translator, the Editor tells us, that to avoid giving offence, several exceptionable sentiments are omitted. Had the author been influenced by similar motives, the work would never have appeared; at least he might have indulged us with the efforts of his genius, without shocking us with the depravity of his principles. The most extensive evil a man can do, is to publish a bad book.

The letters of Werter having been read with avidity, I am to solicit public indulgence for those of the amiable *Charlotte*. They commence at the time Werter's commence, and were written by her to a female friend, with whom she corresponded both before and after the death of Werter. Though they are, in general, miscellaneous, they partake more of the nature of a novel than those of Werter. I might say, that the female mind is more given to narrative than to reflection; the letters of Charlotte, however, will not warrant the assertion: they abound with reflections which, if they do not display a brilliant understanding, discover a good heart. Susceptible of the most tender impressions, and alive to all the feelings of refined sensibility, the natural cheerfulness of her disposition often gave way to pathetic contemplation; and she is not less communicative of her thoughts than of her conduct.

It afforded me no small pleasure to find, that in the letters of Charlotte there was nothing to suppress. I give them at large; and wish I could do the same by her fair friend, of whom one cannot but conceive a high opinion, from the confidence reposed in her by Charlotte, and the great regard she expresses for her correspondence. Regardless of my fate as an Editor, I solicit protection and indulgence only for CHARLOTTE.

LETTERS
OF
CHARLOTTE.

LETTER I.*

THE elegant description of your retirement charms me; but you always sketch with a flattering pencil, and the most captivating colours. You think I can have no objection to so delightful a spot; and indeed I have but one—it is too far from Walheim. As I sincerely regret your absence, do not neglect, my dear girl, to give me the only consolation in your power—the consolation of your en-

* As the dates of these letters only specified the week-days on which they were written, it was thought needless to notice them.

chanting correspondence. To you it will afford some amusement; to me it will communicate real happiness.

Why you are as absolutely buried as if you were in a convent; but though you are thus devoted to Solitude, and are become one of her best beloved disciples, you must by no means take the veil. We cannot dispense with your occasional visits. Walheim, believe me, suffers considerably by your absence.—Our conversations are become dull, for want of your sprightliness; our evenings long; our dances languid.—Adolphus Ferdinand very justly, and very prettily, called you the Euphrosyne of Walheim.

Your raillery, my sweet friend, is out of time. Albert is not here. A melancholy event hath called him hence: the grave receives his father. Albert, overwhelmed with filial grief, pays the last sad duties of filial love; and for a time forgets his Charlotte.

I cannot but lament the death of this good old man. In him Albert found not

only an affectionate father, but a sincere friend; one, who, destitute of the peevishness of age, remembered that he once was young: one, whose evening sky was illumined by the sunshine of cheerfulness, and the beams of religion; and of all characters, what can be more pleasing than that of a good old man?

Albert means to settle all his affairs before his return; I do not, therefore, expect to see him this month. Now, as you are so great an advocate for him, and “would do any thing to accelerate the festival of Hymen,” I think you ought, during his absence, to come and plead his cause; and by your presence render his absence the less irksome.—Adieu!—Present or absent, always believe me to be

Your affectionate

CHARLOTTE.

LETTER II.

You forget, my dear Carolina, that I have not much of what you term "idle time." You forget that I have the superintendence of a little family; and that, in being an eldest sister, I have all the cares of a parent. How, then, can you expect me not only to write frequently, but to write long letters?—Besides, I am bound to write to Albert twice a week, and those letters cost me no small trouble; for, in order to improve ourselves in the English language, we have agreed to correspond in no other. So that all my "idle time," as you call it, is devoted to the reading of English books.

I have just had with me several of your admirers, to invite me to a ball next Tuesday. As I know most of the party, and as no exercise can be more charming, I have promised to attend. I hope there

is no impropriety in it. Albert, I am sure, will not be displeased ; though I am sorry I have not time to acquaint him, and have his answer on the subject.

It has been very warmly, and I dare say, very feelingly asserted by Adolphus Ferdinand, that there can be no dance without you. The language of lovers, you know, is not to be judged by common rules : this is a sort of poetical licence of Ferdinand's, by which we are to understand, that *he* cannot dance without you. If you had a grain of compassion you would give spirit to our dance, and peace to Ferdinand.

LETTER III.

THE occurrences of a ball, you know, always form a grand article in female correspondence; and you will expect a faithful narrative of all our late proceedings. And, indeed, they are not unworthy of commemoration. Independent of mere amusement, meetings of this kind always afford matter of observation, and exhibit traits in characters discoverable only on such occasions.

Mrs. C. accompanied by her lovely niece, and a gentleman, whose name is Werter, was so obliging as to give me a corner in a coach; and though the horizon was gloomy, the good spirits and charming conversation of my companions, rendered the journey very short, and we presently found ourselves in the ball room. Besides our usual set, there were eight or ten strangers, and as they all danced, the room was tolerably well filled.

Much grace was displayed in the minuets, particularly by Frederick, Andran, W. Selftadt, and the gentleman who accompanied us. Your Adolphus and I commenced country dances. The third, I danced with Werter who does the waltz uncommonly well, and was very animated. You know nothing affords me more pleasure than good dancing; and, having a good partner, perhaps I too might be more than ordinarily animated; for in the midst of this dance, our friend Matilda Selftadt significantly pronounced the name of "Albert," which so much excited the curiosity of my partner, and rendered him so importunate, that I at length frankly told him the nature of my connexion with Albert.

I am not vain enough to suppose this information had any effect on the spirits of Werter; but from that moment he was perpetually out. I did not know what to think. I was willing to attribute his disorder to the increase of the lightning, which, during the last half hour,

had become quite alarming ; and the thunder was so loud as to overpower the music. Several ladies quitted the dance ; the panic became general ; the musicians ceased ; and an awful silence succeeded. The mistress of the ceremonies, for so I call Mrs. K. took us into a room, the window-shutters of which prevented us seeing the lightning. Most of the gentlemen went to drinking, and we played at counting.—The morning approached, and we returned home. The scene was truly delightful. We heard the thunder roll afar off ; and whilst the sun was rising in the east, a beautiful rainbow gave splendour to the west. “ Ah,” I said, “ what magnificent simplicity is here !—what vivid colours in the skies !—what emulation in the fields !—O, Klopstock ! who, besides thee, can paint a scene like this ?”—The tear started in my eye, and my heart glowed ; but who can describe angelic luxury ?—Werter said, “ How the splendour of our ball fades away before this !”—

Mrs. C. and her niece slept : besides being extremely early and regular in their hours, they were wearied with dancing. I was set down without disturbing them ; and Werter said he would call in the evening, to tell me how they did.

You will not ask me any thing about the dresses of the ladies. A few years ago, indeed, they would have come in for their share of admiration and description : but to notice them now would be irksome to me, and afford no pleasure to you.—Simplicity seemed to be the goddess of taste, which all the ladies had worshipped ; so that there could be little discrimination or distinction where each was adorned with one species of elegance. I have a great opinion of the good sense and taste of those ladies, who are the first to sacrifice the petty distinctions of splendid apparel to elegant neatness.—Adieu !

LETTER IV.

I FORGOT in my last to tell you, my dear Carolina, that I had a thousand compliments to deliver to you ; for a ball without you, would, you know, necessarily excite much inquiry. Indeed the beaux were very inquisitive. When I told them that you was hid in the very bosom of retirement, Antonine Frederick said, that confirmed his opinion of your being an angel.—“ How can you,” I said, “ use such common appellations ?” — “ Nay,” replied he, “ I am speaking as a philosopher, and not as a lover : don’t you know,” he added, that one of the ancients has said, no being but a brute or an angel can bear absolute retirement ?” — So you see, my dear, you are a philosophical angel, and I shall expect not only learned but frequent discourses from you.—Have compassion on your disciple, and write to me soon. Adieu !

LETTER V.

INDEED you have approved yourself a philosopher. Your last letter on retirement, shews how well you can enjoy it, and to what an admirable end you can convert it. It certainly requires a portion of philosophic resolution, a mind well stored, and, above all, it requires innocence. Guilt seeks dissipation of thought; whilst retirement is the very nurse of contemplation. But it is not necessary that we should always contemplate. The active virtues of society demand our presence in the world. Retirement is not the business of life: it is only the scene of preparation, or of relaxation. That religious philosophy, therefore, which taught men to erect monasteries and convents, could not be founded in truth or nature. In hiding ourselves from a possibility of temptation, we may, indeed, avoid many dangers; but do we not, at

the same time, preclude ourselves from innumerable opportunities of receiving and of communicating happiness?—Besides, our leading star lights us on the way: “*He* went about doing good,” and retired but to pray.

It amounts just to the same thing:—you spoke of temporary retirement, and, you see, I am on the same side of the question.

Though your aunt—who, you say, is the only rational being in your “enchanted castle,”—though she is cheerful, you must necessarily pass many hours, which can be appropriated to nothing but reflection: convert your thoughts into epistles, my dear Carolina, for the instruction and amusement of your friend.

LETTER VI.

I CANNOT but laugh, though I am angry, at your raillery against Adolphus Ferdinand; a man whose greatest foible is, his being in love, which makes him guilty of some little extravagancies that you treat severely, though you are the cause of them. You should not complain of him, without having an eye to yourself: you should not censure the effect, without advertng to the cause.—Come, you are a strenuous advocate for Albert; and it would be ungenerous in me not to take the part of Ferdinand, though I think he is in no great danger, for, if you did not esteem him, you would not write about him.

Ferdinand, you say, is not possessed of those graces of conversation and exterior deportment, by which some others, that you mention, are distinguished. I migh'

ask, are not those others equally destitute of the higher and more amiable accomplishments for which Ferdinand is so universally esteemed?—And are you so avaricious as to desire, and so unreasonable as to expect, every species of perfection in your lover?

The merit of Ferdinand is of the same complexion with that of Albert; and, believe me, my dear girl, it is not for want of abilities that they do not cultivate the graces you allude to: it is either because they despise them, or because the possession of them is incompatible with higher attainments. There is a frivolity necessarily attached to those acquisitions, that would ill become Ferdinand and Albert. I do not expect in the laurel the colours of the tulip.

I admire your commending Albert, and, in the same letter, censuring Ferdinand!—If there is any difference, it is in favour of Ferdinand, who, besides a liberal education, has had the advantage of travelling.—And are you really sorry

he did not return a coxcomb?—O Carolina!—but I know you; and I suspect you will laugh at me for seriously animadverting on what perhaps you wrote in jest.

Remember that, for the future, when you censure Ferdinand, I shall include Albert; thus, what you gain on one side, you will lose on the other; so, my philosophical censor, adieu!

LETTER VII.

Do you want another lover, that you inquire so particularly about Werter?—Female curiosity, to be sure!—A new character in our little hemisphere, like a comet, always attracts general attention, and excites much inquiry;—yes, and as many strange conjectures are formed of one as of the other.

I have not yet seen enough of Werter to form any certain idea of his character. At present, I can only say, that he seems to be a man of taste and sentiment; strongly attached to the polite arts, and, I dare say, can write verses, and probably will when he sees you. His eye is keen, and there is great expression in his countenance: it is that kind of expression which indicates a lofty spirit, tempered by the perpetual operation of a philosophic judgment.

But it is useless in me to attempt de-

scribing what you will discover at a first interview, for you must see him, and that speedily, though, perhaps, you do not know that you are coming to Walheim. I am sure you love my father too well, to refuse a request of his; and his request—with many compliments to your aunt and yourself—is, that you will favour him with your company a few days, to superintend our little family whilst I visit a dying friend—Yes, my dear Carolina, poor Theresa W. whom you have often heard me mention with tenderness, as another Carolina, calls on me to close her dying eyes. Melancholy errand!—but 'tis the voice of friendship:

——As if an angel spoke,

I feel the solemn sound.——

She is abandoned by her physicians, and wishes only to see me. Dear, dear girl! I come, as a dove to its wounded mate—O, that I could bear “healing in my wings!”—Adieu, my Carolina!—In your prayers remember poor Theresa, the friend of your Charlotte.

LETTER VIII.

—YOUR residence at Walheim gives me great satisfaction, because I know every thing will go on as my father wishes.—I found here, a shadow of my Theresa—alas, how wan! I was impatient to see her, and, though she was asleep when I arrived, I stepped softly to her bedside, and kissed her pale hand, that accidentally lay uncovered, as if on purpose to receive me. Disease had robbed her face of all its charms, but delicacy: she looked like a sleeping infant. I sat down by her, and wept. A thousand tender recollections heightened my distress. At length the dear girl awoke, and with an infantile accent, said, “Is my Charlotte come yet?”—I took hold of her hand—“Thy Charlotte is here,” I said, “thy own Charlotte that loves thee”—She turned her head, and, raising it a little, looked

wistfully in my face; a faint pleasure glimmered in her blue eyes—"Indeed, indeed," she said, "this is my Charlotte—O Charlotte! you see"—She could say no more; she grasped my hand, and, reclining her head on the pillow, her eyes were filled with tears. I kneeled by her; my heart was full; but tears had already given me some relief.—"Do not add strength to your disease," I said, "by distressing yourself: Think, Charlotte is with you."—She put my hand to her lips, and kissed it eagerly. I was glad to find she had so much strength—"Believe me, my dear Theresa," I added, "you will be better."—"Now Charlotte is come," she said, I shall be happy: but I must leave thee, my Charlotte; and thou wilt remember"—I interrupted her, "Nay, do not talk of leaving me:—I am come to stay with thee, and thou wilt be better." I had brought with me a phial of those drops that had afforded my dearest mother great relief in her fatal illness. I gave some to Theresa. She raised her languid

head and smiled :—" Now Charlotte is the ministering angel," she said, " who knows—yes, this, indeed, will do me good : I feel it will."—Her lips did not look so livid, and her cheeks were suffused with a pale pink. She was quite placid, and talked with her accustomed elegance—but with a tremulous voice—of the sweets of friendship, and the power of death, which, she said, could not divide the souls that love each other.—" Death," she added, " is like an arrow passing through the air : as that occasions a momentary division ; so death divides the flame of friendship, but it soon closes again."—In this manner she conversed, till weariness brought on sleep.

I hope, and think she is better ; but she is of a spirit so calm and so fortified, that it is difficult to know what she suffers.—You never knew Theresa W. but she is worthy of being known, and you shall know her. Tell my father, she is better ;—he loves her.

I am afraid you find the children trou-

blesome ; but you love them too well to think so. They will be very good if you tell them that Charlotte is gone to fetch Theresa.—Heaven restore her to them and me.

LETTER IX.

I AM glad, my dear friend, to find that Werter visits my father ; and that Ferdinand visits you. Society, is the soul of life, and such society, I hope, will render your temporary residence at Walheim agreeable.

I am happy to say that Theresa is better, but not removed from danger, if it may be called danger to be so near heaven. I do not wonder at your solicitude to know the story of this dear girl ; though I am rather surprised, my father has not told you, for he loves to talk of Theresa. Probably he is too greatly affected with her situation to say much ; for though adversity is generally loquacious, grief, especially in men, is mostly silent.

The father of my Theresa was an English gentleman, and lived at Walheim : an intimacy subsisted between our mothers,

and the same day gave us birth ; but Mrs. W. alas ! did not survive the birth of Theresa ; and in two years afterwards, Mr. W. died, appointing my father guardian to Theresa, and leaving all his effects in my father's care. The little orphan was removed to our house, and became one of us. It was natural that between Theresa and me the tenderest friendship should arise :—" grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength." We slept in the same bed ; were educated in the same manner ; and both my parents regarded Theresa as another Charlotte.

When we grew up, we discovered a similarity of taste and sentiment, which added new joys to our friendship, and rendered it permanent ; for friendship not founded on similarity of sentiment, can never be durable. We were pleased with the same books, and delighted with the same music. Our days were spent in the same pursuits, and our evenings con-

cluded with the same diversions.* The happy years rolled swiftly on; and a friendship thus formed, can end only with life, and then, alas, "'tis the survivor dies!"

The conduct of my father, during the minority of Theresa, was such as highly endeared him to all who knew under what circumstances he was left. To be the sole guardian of an infant, possessed of unknown property, is a delicate trust. Nothing so soon awakes suspicion, and excites scandal; few are the guardians

* The connexion between Charlotte and Theresa, naturally reminds one of Shakespear's Rosalind and Celia, but more particularly of the friendship of Helena and Hermia, so exquisitely described in 'Midsummer Night's Dream.'

We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Created with our needles both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion;
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds
Had been incorporate. So we grew together
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted —

who are not envied by the avaricious, and censured by the malevolent ; and orphans, however decently they have been provided for, generally become objects of pity, from the supposition, that an uncontrouled guardian cannot resist the temptation of enriching himself by those artifices of fraud, which may be practised without the danger of detection.

My father was aware of this, and on the death of Mr. W. took some reputable people, who delivered the property into my father's hands—"All this," he said, "is the property of Theresa, and when sixteen years are elapsed, if Providence permit, I will resign it to her, if not augmented, at least nothing diminished."—He kept his word. The joint birthday of our eighteenth year was solemnized with greater pomp than we had been accustomed to ; an unusual quantity of company was present, and fortunately, among the rest, three of the gentlemen who had assisted my father in removing Theresa's effects. The dear girl and my-

self, directed to dress with more than even birth-day splendour, were astonished at all this preparation ; but after dinner, my father, in the presence of the whole company, delivered Theresa's fortune into her own hands, greatly augmented in value. Theresa, who was loveliness itself, arose gracefully from her seat, and was going to thank him on her knee, but my father prevented it, by meeting, and affectionately embracing, her :—" Thank God !" he said, " I have done my duty. Be as true to thyself as I have been to thee, and be happy—and God for ever bless thee !" —Having pronounced this, with tears, he retired, to indulge those sensations which convey the purest bliss, and mock description. Indeed we all felt a part of it, and the tear of sensibility was in every eye. When my father returned, the glass circulated " To the long life and happiness of Theresa." She arose again, and, after thanking the company, requested my father " to continue her father and guardian : let me, dear

Sir," she added, "let me continue to enjoy your protection, and the friendship of my dear Charlotte, and do with this treasure what seems best to yourself."— I embraced her, and we retired till the dancing begun. My father gave her a written acknowledgment for the deposit she left in his hands; and thus happily discharged a trust of sixteen years, with honour to himself, and advantage to Theresa. Ever since, she has lived sometimes in town, and sometimes with us; and happily combines—what seldom are combined—great discretion and elegant accomplishments.

Conceive then, what I should lose in the death of this amiable girl, and think how her illness distresses me.—I blush at the length of this letter; but narrative is prolix, and, as the Frenchman said, "I have not time to shorten it."*—Adieu!

* Pascal.

LETTER X.

My dear Theresa is so much recovered, that I shall be at Walheim on Saturday. She kindly ascribes the amendment of her health to my presence. The fact is, that her strength has increased ever since the physicians left her. They either mistook the nature of her complaint, or of her constitution. Nature, however, with little assistance, has so far conquered disease, that I rejoice in the thought of seeing her once more at Walheim.—What felicity in prospect!—to see Theresa embrace my Carolina!—and Charlotte made happy by the presence of both!—May no dark cloud intercept those white hours!

LETTER XI.

I AM glad you are convinced : I believe nothing but experience would have convinced you how much my time is taken up. You now know how my days are divided, and that each hour has its stated duty.—I thank you again and again for your friendly attentions at Walheim ; you have won the heart of my father : he says, you are “another Theresa ;” and that, I assure you, from him, is a very high compliment.

It is too true, my dear Carolina—Werter loves me ; and it could not escape your penetration. His perpetual solicitude respecting me, you say, confirmed your opinion. I have for some time observed, with sad anxiety, this growing passion. I have observed it in a thousand minute circumstances : it has given rise to a thousand little incidents that more strongly confirm its reality than innumerable pro-

testations. I cannot but esteem him for his delicacy: he knows I am engaged to Albert; and though I see the ardour of his passion, I learn it only from his eyes;—his tongue is silent.

Had he not known of my attachment to my dear Albert;—my *dear* Albert I say, for why should I hide my heart from you?—had he not heard me acknowledge the worth of Albert, and mention him with tenderness—Charlotte, you know, could never hide her heart:—then would it have been criminal in me to have permitted his visits; to have associated and conversed with him on those friendly terms which banished ceremonious restraint and acknowledge a more than common esteem.

And that I have more than a common esteem for Werter, I do not blush to confess. His taste and sentiments are congenial with my own; his conversation enlightens; and he enters into the spirit of the sciences; he reads Klopstock with feeling, tempered by judgment; and has translated a part of Ossian; for, what

is better than all, he understands English.* He loves music, and makes himself useful by keeping my harpsichord nicely in tune.—Tell me, my dear Carolina, tell me, is there any impropriety in esteeming a man of merit?—But do not think I love—No, Albert! my vows are sacred to thee!—I have but one heart: it is thine—And though I can love none but thee, surely I may esteem Werter:—though that love only can be pure, which glows for one; yet holy is that friendship which glows for all.—Tell me, my Carolina, am I in this to blame?

Your Ferdinand—I *will* call him *your* Ferdinand—esteems Werter; and so, I know, will Albert; for he loves the society of men of genius.—Adieu!—Need I say my father greets you?—he does more: he loves you.

* From this passage, it is plain that Werter, who speaks highly of Ossian in his letters, had Mr. Macpherson's *translation*; and that Germany, as well as Scotland, is a stranger to the *original Erse*.

LETTER XII.

AN, my dear Carolina !—I see my error, and I acknowledge the justice of your remark.—An attachment so sudden and so strong !—I see my error, Carolina, but could I see it then ; and could I avoid it ? —Whilst I conversed with Werter, the idea of passion never entered my mind. You well know the disposition of your Charlotte—and you will reflect, how often we are made happy or miserable by the accidental concurrence of even trivial circumstances : of circumstances that, like small rivulets, derive all their power from casual conjunction. But how could I foresee this ?

“ When you first discovered the flame in his bosom”—it was then too late to apply your remedy : it was then too late to “ throw on the water of cold reserve.” Werter knew the candour of Charlotte :

he knew she was incapable of affecting what she did not feel—and to treat with indifference that affection which she could not return.—And how could I speak to him on the subject of a passion which he had never declared ?

When I discovered the flame in his bosom, and saw it sparkle in his eyes ; when his visits became more and more frequent, and his conversations were interrupted by involuntary sighs ; when I saw him come like a bounding roe over the fields, with all the ardour of youth ; and when I saw him return, melancholy and dejected, measuring his pace with funeral steps ; then, my Carolina, then I began to tremble : I stood aghast at the innocent mischief I had done : like poor villagers that from a hill behold their cottages in flames, and can only lament their fall ; so I regarded the passion of Werter :—I saw, but could not relieve. I put confidence in his reason ; I opposed the strength of his philosophy to that of his passion, and derived consolation from

the great English poet :*—"Violent love," he says, "soon evaporates; furious flames quickly expire."

Yes, I see my error : I should not have admitted an intimacy with one so susceptible of the finer feelings ;—yet these, alas, were the silken threads that formed the cord of friendship ; the unfortunate friendship of Werter and Charlotte !—Yet, why unfortunate ?—let me not "cast the fashion of uncertain evils : " Werter may conquer his passion ; Charlotte may lose the lover, and regain the friend ; and all may yet be well.—May heaven so speed the hours !—Adieu !

* I imagine Charlotte alludes to the following passage in 'Romeo and Juliet :'

These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die, like fire and powder,
Which as they meet consume — — — —

— — — — —
Therefore love moderately, long love doth so.

LETTER XIII.

TELL me, my dear friend, are you of the common opinion, that love has not the same influence in this age it had in that which we call the age of romance? Believe me, I think it has. Human nature, we are told, is the same in all ages; and if so, surely it must, at all times, be actuated by the same passions, and in nearly the same degree.

You will ask me, whether I believe, that a modern gallant would turn knight errant for his mistress?—I answer, that if it was the fashion, he would. There is a fashion for every thing. As manners change, the modes of expressing the passions change with them. It is not so in love only, but in all the passions. Malice and revenge, which heretofore assumed horrible and tremendous forms, now wear different aspects; I mean in what are

called civilized countries. So that though the “outward signs” of the passions are considerably varied, it does not follow that the passions themselves are extinct ; they continue to exhibit themselves as much as ever, but in different shapes.

It is a kind of fashion, nay, I know not whether there is not a natural propensity in us to depreciate the age in which we happen to live ; but I think they go too far, who contend, that the nobler passions have not the same influence they ever had, and at the same time affirm, that those of a malignant nature have gained an ascendancy. This does not agree with either fact or reason. I am persuaded, that those who make these unfavourable conclusions are such as are unwilling to attribute actions to their true motives, and are more studious to discover the agency of malevolence, than to give to others the credit of virtuous principles.

Indeed, my dear friend, I doubt not the existence of real and honourable, nay, of romantic love, in as great a degree as

ever we read of; that it is frequently counterfeited, I must also admit.—You will next ask me, how we are to distinguish the true from the false?—But, you know, almost all the poets have answered that question.* To them, I must, there-

* None of the poets have displayed more happy talents on the subject than Mrs, Barbauld; and I cannot resist gratifying the reader of taste with the following very elegant and truly poetic stanzas, by that lady, so immediately applicable to Charlotte's observation.

Come here, fond youth, whoe'er thou be,
That boasts to love as well as me,
And if thy breast have felt so wide a wound,
Come hither, and thy flame approve ;
I'll teach thee what it is to love,
And by what marks true passion may be found.

It is to be all bath'd in tears,
To live upon a smile for years.
To lie whole ages at a beauty's feet ;
To kneel, to languish, and implore,
And still, tho' she disdain, adore ;
It is to do all this, and think thy sufferings sweet.

It is to gaze upon her eyes,
With eager joy and fond surprize,

fore, refer you, as the best philosophers in love.—Adieu, my sweet friend!—I sincerely hope Adolphus Ferdinand will

Yet temper'd with such chaste and awful fear
As wretches feel who wait their doom ;
Nor must one ruder thought presume,
Tho' but in whispers breath'd, to meet her ear.

It is to hope, tho' hope were lost,
Tho' heaven and earth thy passion crost ;
Tho' she were bright as sainted queens above,
And thou the least and meanest swain
That folds his flock upon the plain,
Yet if thou dars't not hope, thou dost not love.

It is to quench thy joy in tears,
To nurse strange doubts and groundless fears ;
If pangs of jealousy thou hast not prov'd,
Tho' she were fonder and more true
Than any nymph old poets drew,
Oh, never dream again that thou hast lov'd.

If when the darling maid is gone,
Thou dost not seek to be alone,
Wrapt in a pleasing trance of tender woe ;
And muse, and fold thy languid arms,
Feeding thy fancy on her charms,
Thou dost not love, for love is nourish'd so.

convince you, better than my arguments,
that there are hearts which flame with
true devotion to the god of love !

If any hopes thy bosom share
But those which love has planted there,
Or any cares but his thy breast enthrall,
Thou never yet his power hast known ;
Love sits on a despotic throne,
And reigns a tyrant, if he reigns at all.

Now if thou art so lost a thing,
Here all thy tender sorrows bring,
And prove whose patience longest can endure ;
We'll strive whose fancy shall be lost
In dreams of fondest passion most,
For if thou thus hast lov'd, oh ! never hope a cure.

L E T T E R X I V .

It seldom happens that the language of panegyric is just ; yet so excellent is your judgment, that I cannot withhold my assent to the character you have drawn of Werter ; but, give me leave to tell you, the picture is not finished, and that another dash of the pencil—a dark shade—is wanting to perfect the likeness.

You have seen Werter only with others. Notwithstanding his philosophical reasonings, and the apparent complacency of his disposition, he is the very slave of a temper naturally impetuous, and, if I may so express it, rarefied by irritability of nerves, and extreme delicacy, or, at least, peculiarity of taste.

You will, perhaps, smile at my idea, that extreme delicacy of taste is injurious to the temper ; and you will tell me, that true taste not only refines the under-

standing, but meliorates the disposition. Much, certainly, depends on the natural tendency of the temper; and extreme delicacy of taste in one of a cynical turn, will by no means diminish a propensity to querulous fastidity : on the contrary, it will add fuel to the flame of intellectual discontent, in proportion as the taste is offended, and the feelings are hurt, by the obtrusions of incongruity, and the absurdities of ignorance.

I cannot call Werter a cynic; but his infirmity of temper is augmented by his delicacy of taste; and the most trifling occurrences make lasting impressions on his mind. He has little command over himself; and whilst his natural temper thus overpowers him, how will he stem the torrent of passion? like the exuberance of his imagination, it will know no bounds : as the one is the source of his most exalted pleasures, so the other, I fear, will prove the cause of his severest afflictions.

LETTER XV.

You know how delightful it is to walk on the terrace under the chesnut-trees, and see the setting sun. Our little mansion is at a convenient distance from the village, and its situation on an eminence gives it an air of cheerfulness unknown to the valley. Werter is charmed with the terrace, and said, last night, if it would not seem odd, he would every evening contemplate the beauties of the valley, and the meanderings of the stream by the setting sun.—“And why,” I said, “will it seem odd?—you know your company is always acceptable at the lodge.”—“Nay,” he replied, “I need not tell *you* why it will seem so. ’Tis a sad thing, Charlotte, that I cannot contemplate the setting sun, nor the loveliness of those eyes, but that some will regard it as a trespass”—I interrupted him: “Sec,” I

said, "see how swiftly that solitary bird wings over the wood, on our left."—"The flock," said Werter, "is gone before; more successful than this, they have found provision for their young, and are returned home richly laden. This too is a parent: unwilling to return without the expected food, she has stopped beyond the minute of departure; for nothing equals the regularity of birds, but the sun they rise with."—"And yet," I said, "she cannot be late."—"O," he replied, "a minute, in her account, is an age: consider, Charlotte, the joy of every little family when the flock arrives! what a chirping through the wood!—whilst one poor brood hears all, but sees no parent bird:—the surrounding joy, and every moment's delay, add to their distress. This the parent bird knows—she wings her way with treble haste"—"And if"—I said, but he interrupted me, and, seizing my hand, exclaimed, "O Charlotte! do not make the cruel supposition—If, after a day's absence, I ascended this hill to see

the setting sun, and under these shades found no Charlotte—if hurried away by ruffian hands—O God!”—“Do not,” I said, “do not subject your imagination to fictitious distress ; it is thus you weary your spirits, and not only darken, but shorten your days.”—He sighed, and lifting up his eyes towards heaven, “Alas!” he said, “when I cannot bear to think of the time when there will be no Charlotte, what days of misery must I count when—but thou art here, my Charlotte, and I will be composed.”—“Werter,” I replied, “it is ungenerous to distress me thus : you know Charlotte’s friendship is” —“It is,” said he, “beyond all price : it binds me to the earth, and gives me a foretaste of heaven.”—“There was a time,” I said, “when Charlotte was unknown to Werter—recollect those days, and be happy.”—“Alas!” he replied, “the recollection of past pleasures, however innocent, makes us melancholy. I never yet felt content so absolute, but that hope flattered me with unknown

prospects—and now the Paradise, the blooming Eden, is revealed : one moment I feast on celestial delicacies ; the landscape shews nothing but perennial brilliancy : it vanishes the next—just as the sun, this moment, sinks behind the hills, and, like him, leaves a few rays of hope to keep me from despair.”—“ Yes,” said I, “ but you remember the poet :

Setting suns shall rise in glory—

And to morrow, Werter, I shall expect your promised translation of a song of Ossian.—It is time now to bid the children good night.”

We went in, and after kissing the children all round, I played some lively airs on my harpsichord ; and, soon after my father came, Werter went away, I thought, in tolerable spirits.

You see, my dear Carolina, you see, there is a wild enthusiasm in the friendship and sentiments of Werter, that must subject him to perpetual extremes of happiness or misery. That spark of divinity

which animates his frame, resembles one of those glaring meteors that sometimes cross the hemisphere, at once exciting dread and pleasure. I thank heaven, the soul of Albert more resembles a fixed star!—

LETTER XVI.

“ You have the advantage of me, Carolina. Your residence in England has made you too learned for me. I could hardly read the English quotation in your last letter : I mean I could not read it with ease. I will, however, read the “ Seasons ;” though I have heard Albert say, he thought it very difficult to enter into the spirit of that poem. My English reading has, in a great measure, been confined to the dramatic poets ; they are extremely interesting ; and I think, of all modes of writing, dialogue is the easiest to be understood. I begin to relish the Night-Thoughts, and so much admire the “ Narcissa,”* that I am attempting a translation, with which I intend to surprize Albert on his return.

* Night the third.

I wonder you have patience to learn the French ; for though it is easy enough, it has nothing to recommend it : neither the strength of the English, nor the delicacy of the Italian ; and when one hears it spoken, one would imagine it was but a kind of half language, for there is a perpetual distortion of the body in gesticulation, which seems to be as essential as the words. Werter understands it well enough to point out its peculiar beauties—and I suppose the Cherokee itself has beauties—but he prefers the language of every other civilized country, except the Dutch, and of their civilization *he* entertains some doubts—you know what a people must be, for *him* to think them civilized. When I first asked him, what he thought of the French language ? —“ Think !” said he, “ why I think, if heaven was suddenly to endue baboons and monkeys with the power of articulation, they would instantly jabber French.” —“ And yet,” replied I, “ you read French”—“ True,” said Werter, “ just

as I do many other foolish things, because it is the fashion.

“How comes it then,” I asked, “that if the language is not intrinsically good, it has become so general? it is the common language of all Europe.”—“Because,” said Werter, “the French have more vanity than all Europe: it is,” added he, “that kind of vanity, which, in some countries, is peculiar to quack-doctors: they have the assurance to tell you that no language is like their’s—indeed,” said he, “so far I believe them;—that their’s is the best of all possible languages, and people very good-naturedly take their word for it.”—

And so, my dear Carolína, you are studying the language of “baboons and monkeys!”—I am surprized that Ferdinand does not persuade you to study my favourite, the Italian. Would not it be more pleasant, think you, to read a sonnet of Petrarch, than an epigram of Voltaire?—

Jesting apart, my dearest friend, let my tongue speak what language it will, the language of my heart is, that I am ever, and affectionately thine.

LETTER XVII.

WALHEIM is once more blessed with the presence of Theresa W.—the dear girl is come!—She is come, Carolina, to re-establish her health and to regain her bloom. My father received her with open arms, and the children wearied their *Terey* with kisses.

I have nothing now to disturb my repose, but the too ardent attachment of Werter. I wish Providence would so ordain it, that the charms of Theresa may influence Werter, as those of Carolina do Ferdinand.

To complete our felicity, cannot you pass a week at Walheim? We are to have another ball the next month; and must I again prove a poor substitute for Carolina, and join the dance with Ferdinand?—For by that time, Theresa, I hope, will be able to accompany us, and

of course, I shall contrive that Werter shall be chiefly engaged with her.

Theresa, since her arrival here, has found a tenth musé in *Hygeia* the goddess of health. And the following are her effusions.

O shades of Walheim ! and ye streams that give
Melodious murmurs to the passing gale,
Once more I breathe among your healthy groves,
Once more I drink the music of the vale.

Hygeia ! goddess of the smiling hours !
Daughter of Temperance and of chaste Desire !
To thee once more I lift the cheerful eye,
To thee once more I strike the sylvan lyre.

Dost thou not dwell'mong Walheim's blessed shades?
Dost thou not wanton in her happy vale?—
'Thy beaming face I see in orient morn,
I feel thy kisses in the summer's gale.

I hear thee in the sprightly song of birds,
And in the mid-day humming of the bee ;—
Thou can'st not breathe, but sweetest music plays
'Mong bending corn, and in the waving tree.

Give me—O goddess of the smiling hours !
With thee to dwell in Walheim's peaceful groves,
With thee to wander o'er her shady hills,
With thee repose me in her green alcoves.

With grateful feeling glows my cheerful heart,
Warm'd with return of thy all-sacred fire ;—
To thee I dedicate this humble verse,
Daughter of Temperance and of chaste Desire !

O shades of Walheim ! and ye streams that give
Melodious murmurs to the passing gale,
Once more I breathe among your healthy groves,
Once more I drink the music of the vale.

I expect these verses to have no small
influence with Werter, I assure you.—
Adieu !

LETTER XVIII.

FOR your generous sentiments, a thousand thanks!—The good opinion of my dear Carolina, makes me happy; and I trust my conduct will always be such as to merit a continuation of that friendly intercourse which is to me

A perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

I *will* be watchful over my heart—your advice is engraved there—and what shall erase the image of Albert?—Need I blush to say this to my Carolina?—Your letter must be my apology, wherein you bid me “beware of my heart.” Why should I play the hypocrite, and with Carolina too?—my heart is Albert’s. Of course, what you call the “old emblem of the

moth and flame," applies not to me. Need I dread the fire when my wings are gone? —Be candid, Carolina, and tell me,—has Ferdinand burnt *your* wings?—How say you :—wings or no wings?

LETTER XIX.

“JUST touched the flame, and likely to grow again!”—I am glad, however, you cannot fly—Shall I tell Ferdinand, that you are half *wingless*?

The two strangers have met: Werter and Theresa are mutually pleased with each other; there is already that very friendship between them which I wished to have subsisted between Werter and myself: they are, as it were, brother and sister. That delightful intercourse of sentiment, and sympathy of taste, that delicate sensibility which displays all the blossoms of friendship, unmixed with the thorns of passion—this, my Carolina, is the happy lot of Werter and Theresa.*

* It is rather extraordinary that this lady is not mentioned in Werter's letters; but Charlotte engrossed all his serious thoughts—all his *literary* attention.

Ah, Werter! why must the blossom of *our* friendship wither with the heat of too warm a sun?—O, call to its aid the dews of reason,—the showers of philosophy,—or—if it must be so—drown it in the waters of oblivion!—

O, my Carolina! his eyes have too, too much expression.—Without his saying even a “civil thing,” Theresa discovered all. Will Albert read with *such* discrimination, the sad contents of Werter’s countenance?—My Carolina!—what is to be done?

Theresa advised me, as you did, to treat him with great coldness—I did so—and the consequence was, so much extravagance of action, such incoherent conversations, such dejection, that it attracted my father’s attention, who very seriously told me, that “he thought Werter had read a little too much of the *Greek book* which he calls his pocket companion,”—meaning Homer, which Werter always carries about him. Even the children remarked it, and complained, that “Wer-

ter did not build houses of cards, nor romp with them on the floor.”—This was just as I expected : Carolina and Theresa are strangers to the disposition and temper of Werter.—I was afraid to repeat the experiment ; and it may seem vanity in me to say, that I dreaded more fatal consequences ; but the impetuosity of Werter’s temper, the wildness of his eye, the distraction of soul, which he endeavoured to hide—O my dear friend !—

Theresa too was alarmed. I was, in some measure, obliged to follow her advice, as she might have attributed my neglect of it to a wrong motive ; but, acquitting me of all improper attachment, she requested I would resume the smile of friendship, and treat Werter in my accustomed manner. Perhaps I overacted my part :* for the next time Werter

* This seems to have given occasion to Werter’s nineteenth letter, in which he says, “ She loves me !”

went away, he repeated two lines of our favourite English poet :*

My gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow,
Tho' wither'd is my vine, and harp unstrung.

Again, my Carolina what is to be done ?
Is there no such thing as lasting bliss ?
and is not innocence secure from misery ?
—Alas, I fear not !—devouring tempests
and gentle rains descend on all alike.

* Young.

LETTER XX.

No ! I by no means think it “ indelicate ” in you to contend against the existence of platonic friendship : it is mere matter of opinion. But against your opinion, I bring a fact ; I produce my vouchers—Werter and Theresa. There is platonic friendship in the strictest sense. But you will, perhaps, ask me, will it continue such ? Will not Albert’s presence—Ah, my dear friend ! do not flatter me with ideal peace. Can Werter’s presence make *me* forget Albert ?—Will not my esteem remain for Werter when Albert comes ? In Albert’s presence will Werter’s flame expire ?

If the friendship which I envy would terminate in love, I should indeed be happy. But I fear my Carolina prophecies in vain.

Respecting Platonics, I admire your

candour, though I do not subscribe to your creed. Possibly I may be mistaken; I may have too high an opinion of human nature. We all believe that angelic intercourse is intellectual; and we all know and feel, that our most supreme felicity originates in *mind*; that our affections are stronger in proportion as they are refined, and are refined in proportion to the cultivation of our intellectual faculties. And why may not minds be so cultivated, and so rapt, as it were, in the exercise and contemplation of their own powers, as to hold an independent intercourse? I do not say this is common. I contend only for the possibility of its existence. Holy men hold converse with heaven: they have a spiritual intercourse with the “Father of lights;” yet holy men are mortal.—

But this you will call a summer evening’s reverie.—Be it so: I love to indulge myself in such reveries as impress on my mind a favourable idea of human nature, which makes me respect mankind, and

myself ; and so long as these impressions remain, I cannot easily be led to do any thing unbecoming the duty and the dignity of a rational being.

My last letter from Albert informs me, that he has settled his father's affairs ; has great hope of succeeding in his application to the minister, and that he shall soon be able to fix the day for his return to Walheim.—My dear Carolina, adieu !

LETTER XXI.

TRANQUILLITY reigns at Walheim. My days pass pleasantly ; the presence of my Theresa gives me great consolation. To be fully employed in domestic scenes, and to enjoy the communications of such a mind as Theresa's—this is the source of my felicity. It recalls to my memory those days of happiness, when my dear mother blessed this mansion—she that was at once my parent, guide, instructor, friend.

Werter was here yesterday, and in the evening we walked under the lime-trees. Theresa has recovered all her sprightliness, and was jocular at the expense of Werter, by pretending to have discovered that he is in love, by certain poetical signs ; and asked what maid of the village had been able to captivate the philosophical Werter ?

“Nay,” said he, “I shall not pretend to deny that I am in love : because I would not pay so ill a compliment to your judgment. But if, my dear Theresa,” added he, “these signs were not visible before *you* came to Walheim, I leave you to guess whose chains I wear.”—Theresa blushed—“There, Theresa,” said I, “you see what it is to accuse philosophy of so much weakness.”—“Yes,” she replied, “Minerva scorns the darts of Cupid.”—“Not so,” said Werter, “she sometimes assists the little god, and, because he is blind, directs his arrows to the proper objects.—But,” he continued, “every attachment accompanied by reciprocal civility now receives the appellation of love ; either because there is little real affection subsisting, or because people cannot, perhaps will not, distinguish love from friendship.”—“I remember a lady Sir,” said Theresa, “whose sentiments I had great reason to admire, who contended, that there actually was not any distinction ; and I wish

I could also remember her argument to prove it.”—“For my part,” I said, “I have not turned my thoughts to the subject, but,” I added, laughing, “you know I am very learned, and can read English poetry: the English poets, you know, are philosophers, and one of them* decides the matter in a single line—

“True love and friendship are the same.”

“I should be extremely happy,” said Werter, looking at me, “if that were the fact. But, my dear friend, you must recollect the circumstance that gave rise to your quotation. The poet’s mistress had promised him her friendship, and, to augment his happiness, he adduces your argument, which he found excellent in theory, but false in fact; for I never learnt that he could persuade her into the same opinion.”

“I know not,” replied Theresa, “what may be the sentiments of poets and philosophers; but I feel I love my friends,

* Thomson.

and I cannot separate the ideas of love and friendship : be so good, Sir," added she, " as to favour me with the line of distinction."—" Answer my questions candidly," said Werter, " and I have a solution at hand. Either I deceive myself, or I am honoured with your friendship."—" Certainly."—" And yet," he said, " according to your account, that cannot be, unless you are in love with me."—" In love!" replied Theresa, colouring, " I have, indeed, a sisterly affection."—" And what is that," said he, " but the truest friendship?—for that, a thousand thanks, my dear Theresa. This friendship, however," he continued, " originates in similarity of sentiment; in a reciprocation of good opinion, and is independent of passion. Though it adds charms to existence, yet existence is to be borne without it. But you may one day feel an attachment which will render existence miserable, except in the presence of a particular object"—" I suppose, Sir," said Theresa, interrupting Werter,

“ I suppose, Sir, you speak from experience ; otherwise I may fairly oppose theory to theory ; and we may contend without a possibility of conviction.”—
“ There are few women,” replied Werter, “ to whom I would acknowledge myself to have been the slave of that passion, though it is the ‘ noblest and the best.’ It is a subject on which they can never be serious, but when they are under its influence. I have too good an opinion of Theresa’s candour to suppose her desirous of any confession to confirm my opinion.”
—We were at that instant joined by your Ferdinand, to whom we referred the question in debate. I need not tell *you* his manner—“ Difference between love and friendship !” said he, “ just the same difference there is between fruit and blossoms.”—“ Exactly !” resumed Werter, “ we are contented with contemplating the one, and cannot help devouring the other.”

“ It is vain,” I said, “ to put the question to a vote, where there is an equal

division; but if Carolina were here"—
"O, then," said Ferdinand, I should be
a true advocate, and change sides for the
sake of better fees."—

So pass our evening walks. Theresa
has brought a quantity of new music;
and her melodious voice again gives
cheerfulness to Walheim.

And why, my dear Carolina, why will
you not personally join this little band of
friends? Theresa longs to embrace you;
and Werter teases Ferdinand, by telling
him that you will certainly be the most
domestic wife in the world, for, says he,
"you see, neither friendship, love, nor
music, can draw her from home!"—How
can you withstand such mighty powers
as these?

LETTER XXII.

SPELLS, and preternatural powers!—So you have converted Solitude into an enchantress, by whose magic you are bound to your lonely castle! Theresa and I will come, and drive the sorceress forth, and set you free, if we find her power too potent against your own efforts. For my part, I have provided an English incantation, which, as it was penned by the greatest magician that ever called “spirits from the vasty deep,” I expect will be very powerful: and thus it runs: * ‘Let
 ‘ me conjure you, by the rights of our
 ‘ fellowship, by the consonancy of our
 ‘ youth, by the obligation of our ever-
 ‘ preserved love, and by what more dear,
 ‘ a better proposer could charge you
 ‘ withal’—fly to Walheim!

* Hamlet.

If this will not do, I shall have recourse to another expedient. There resides in this neighbourhood a great magician, whom I will oppose to your enchantress, and I shall be wofully deceived if he does not break her wand, and dissolve the charm. You may have heard of him—his name is Adolphus Ferdinand.—So look to it!

LETTER XXIII.

I AM glad you think of coming to the ball ; I am likewise glad there is to be a ball. Albert will be here ; and novelty may attract Werter.—Yes, my dear Carolina, Albert is on his way to Walheim. The presence of Theresa will be a vast relief to me, without which I should be at a loss to know what to do ; for, alas ! I have a new lesson to teach my heart. It must not appear to Albert, that I know any thing of the passion of Werter ; and I hope it will escape Albert's attention. Indeed, indeed, my Carolina, strange sensations arise in my bosom : I wish, yet tremble, to see Albert !—

A gentleman came from the town yesterday on business to Theresa ; and, as he staid late, Werter and I walked under the thick chesnut-trees, and my father joined us, on his return from the town,

where he had been a few days.—“Charlotte,” he said, “there is a friend of yours on the way to Walheim, who means to visit you ‘speedily!’”—“Dear Sir,” I replied, “who is it?”—“Need I tell you?” he said,—“Albert.”—Leaning on Werter’s arm, I perceived him to be agitated, and looking in his face, I saw he was pale. I was glad my father did not notice it; but he went forward, saying, “I suppose I shall find a housekeeper—my little Spaniard”—so he frequently calls Theresa, whose mother was a Spanish gentlewoman of good family.

The moon was just beginning to rise, and I said to Werter, “Let us follow my father.”—“O Charlotte!” he replied, “what shall now become of Werter?—I respect Albert, because he loves you; but the idea of his approach chills me. I cannot think of entering the house again: I am too much agitated. And must I then lose this heavenly intercourse? Must I no more see Charlotte?—no more pour out my soul before her, and receive com-

fort from her smiles?—Shall I not learn to regulate my spirit by her serenity?—and must I wander through the world destitute of light—for without Charlotte all is darkness!”—I replied, “These are words, Werter, which I did not expect to hear from you, and I know not how to answer them. Indeed, Werter, you distress me. You must either accept my friendship on such terms as heaven may afford, or”—“Spare,” he cried, “spare the cruel word. O Charlotte! can any thing equal the thought of separation?—I could die, my Charlotte—nay, and”—I interrupted him—“Alas, Werter,” I said, “I have been to blame to encourage a friendship so prejudicial to the peace of both.—But friendship is the child of peace, and Werter’s passion murders the innocent offspring of unoffending sympathy. Do not,” I added, “anticipate the sorrows that may never come: I respect you, Werter,—take this hand, Werter,—nay bathe it not with tears,—and let me intreat you—I value your

friendship—let me prevail on you—if not for your own, at least for my peace, forbear a language, which, however it may distress me, I cannot—I must not regard. Will Werter let Charlotte ask in vain?” —“ O Charlotte !” he said, “ your goodness overwhelms me ; I will endeavour to be happy : indeed I ought to be, when Charlotte is my friend.” —“ Charlotte,” I replied, “ will always be the friend of Werter, whilst Werter is friendly to the peace of Charlotte.”

He was a good deal composed, and I knew that by diverting his attention to some peculiar object, his mind would become serene. “ How beautifully,” I said, “ do the moon-beams dance on the waters !” —“ But the waters,” he replied, “ are ruffled : so Charlotte’s goodness plays upon my heart, and” —“ Why, Werter,” I said, “ why will you let fond imagination destroy your peace ? Is this becoming *Wetter* ?—Wetter whose mind should be calmed by the superiority of its powers ?—or does philosophy aid passion ?—and

must Werter envy the peace that dwells in yon miserable huts where one sees glimmering lights over the hills?—Come, Werter," I added, "let not poor hinds instruct us to be happy: let us join the domestic circle, and seek felicity in the bosom of friendship—believe me," I said, "we shall find it there."—"Alas!" he replied, "where shall Werter find felicity, but in Charlotte's friendship? and "Albert"—"Albert," I said, "will esteem the friends of Charlotte, and is not Werter one?"—

As we returned, I endeavoured to convince Werter of the advantages he would derive from the friendship of a good and liberal-minded man, who was happy in joining a knowledge of the world with a love of retirement, and whose judgment was never warped by passion. "Yes," he replied, smiling, "an excellent contrast to me, who despise the world, and never discovered any judgment but in loving Charlotte."—"Nay," I said, "I dare say your judgment had nothing to do in

the matter: love, you know, is involuntary."—"My affection, I grant you," he said, "was involuntary; but it was reason that rivetted the chain."—"The chain of friendship," said I, "for what has reason to do with passion?"

I foresaw this would have been a long argument, but we were now at the door, and he was for returning home: "Come," I said, "one song from Theresa."—"Let it be plaintive,—let it be heavenly," said he, "let it lead me, as you do, from the earth."

Thus, you see, my dearest Carolina, my days of trial are hastening on. The return of my dear Albert—but who shall drink from the cup of joy unmixed?—The beverage is immortal, and none but angels taste it.

LETTER XXIV.

HE is come, my dear friend ! Albert is come, and I am—happy ! Werter has seen, and esteems him. Nor is the esteem lost : Albert returns it, and regards Werter as a man whose taste can be surpassed only by his eccentricity. Rejoice, my dear girl, for your Charlotte is happy. We want nothing but Carolina, to enjoy every pleasure which can be communicated by friendship, music, and retirement.

Albert has not only paid the last duties to his father, and settled all his affairs, but he has also been successful in his application at court ; and though the place he has obtained is not so lucrative as had been expected, fortunately it requires no attendance to prevent his remaining here.

You would have laughed to have seen how Albert was puzzled what to make of

Werter, from the descriptions given by my father and Theresa. When he inquired whether we had any new visitants : “ O yes,” said my father, “ there is Werter, a lover of Theresa’s.”—“ Of mine, Sir !” said Theresa. “ Why, to be sure,” replied my father, “ for, before you came, he was not here above three times a week ; and now, when is he away ?” — “ And what is he ?” Albert asked. “ Heaven knows !” answered my father, “ but sometimes, I think he is mad.”—“ Mad !” cried Theresa, “ do you think, Sir, he is mad because, as you say, he is a lover of mine ?”—“ No, no,” said my father, “ I rather think his pocket companion, as he calls his Greek book, has had the most influence.”—“ O, then,” Albert said, “ much learning hath made him mad.”—“ My dear Sir,” said Theresa, “ it is no such thing : Werter is a man of genius.”—“ Yes !” exclaimed my father, “ he has a very pretty genius at building houses of cards for the children, and rambling in the woods when he should

be in bed. To be sure, he tunes Charlotte's harpsichord, and that" added my father, "is the only thing he does like other people."—"Why now, Albert," said Theresa, "I assure you, Werter is a man of extraordinary taste"—"Very extraordinary indeed!" interrupted my father, "he has a very extraordinary taste in making speeches, and, rather than be out of practice, I caught him one day making a speech to a pear-tree!"—"To a pear-tree!"* said Albert, "what could he say to a pear-tree?"—"Nay," replied my father, "I suppose it was Greek; I walked on, and would not interrupt him."—"Well," said Albert, "I cannot tell what to make of him."—"O," my father said, "the day will not pass without your seeing him, and then I'll ask your opinion whether he is mad or not?"

When my father had left table, for this was at dinner, we explained to Albert the character of Werter, who came in the

* See Werter, Letter xxxiv.

evening, and my father was astonished to hear him and Albert converse on subjects which my father was fully persuaded Werter knew nothing about; and when he was gone, my father said, "Take away his pocket companion, and don't let him see Theresa, and I believe Werter might do something."—

This mutual harmony of Werter and Albert gives me great comfort; and I hope the passion of Werter will subside into a friendship which I shall always regard as a source of intellectual pleasure.—Once more, my dear Carolina, I can conclude my letter with a cheerful heart; and once more write *adieu*!—without any sigh but for your absence.

LETTER XXV.

I AM afraid my dear Carolina must have discovered, in some of my late letters, an appearance of vanity. But you will recollect that they are chiefly narrative. In relating what has passed between Werter and myself, I could not avoid giving you his own words; and little regard is to be paid to the language of passion, whether of love or anger. You see, my dear, how nearly abuse and compliment are allied: so nearly, that sometimes one is mistaken for the other.

I should find myself extremely at a loss to give, verbally, an account of the circumstances which I communicate to you by letter.—But in a confidential correspondence, and especially with my Carolina, I can lay open my heart, and reveal all its weaknesses.

I have always regarded letters as a sort

of proxies, sometimes instructed to deliver such sentiments as one could not freely communicate otherwise.

Some very grave, and some very light people, look on a correspondence of this kind as very silly. The contents of the correspondence may frequently be silly enough ; but the practice is not the worse for that ; like every thing else, it may sometimes be abused. To put our thoughts in writing, and habituate ourselves to give them language, will soon enable us to do it with facility ; and surely that is an accomplishment well worth cultivation.

But this is not the only advantage resulting from a confidential correspondence. If we made it a rule to give an account of our actions, it might be one way of preventing some from doing things which they would be ashamed to acknowledge. Hence, the vast importance in our choice of friends : virtue, as well as vice, is strengthened by connexion ; example comes directly home, and has its full influence on the mind. Those, therefore,

who contend against the confidential correspondence of virtuous friends, would prevent their progress in a necessary accomplishment, and deprive them of one of the guards of virtue.

Believe me, my dear Carolina, I regard your friendship as one of the chief blessings of my life ; and the communication of your sentiments as one of my most exalted pleasures. The hemisphere of my friendship is very small ; I look on you as no less than the sun in it : and all your letters as rays, conveying light and comfort to your Charlotte.—Adieu.

LETTER XXVI.

YOUR Adolphus, yesterday, favoured us with a visit. The conversation accidentally turned on the education of women. Poor Theresa and myself were almost beaten out of the field of contention. My father enumerated several instances of female indiscretion and ruin, which he called the natural consequences of elegant accomplishments. I observe that the aged, in general, have this strange prejudice against female education being carried beyond the common extent. It is not difficult to account for this: most women who have a turn for mental acquisition, are apt to neglect the more common, and, consequently, the more useful, pursuits of life; and people do not judge, and form their opinion of us, from what we know, but from what we do. Those parents may well declaim against a refined

education, who find themselves and their commands disregarded, and their opinions treated with contempt or ridicule, by their children. Nothing is more universally shunned than, what is called, a learned woman ; as if learning, so far from being ornamental, were actually a disgrace to the sex. It is simply the misapplication of it : a woman may, if she pleases, be very learned, without being ridiculous. I will fairly own, however, that there are not so many women rendered amiable, as ridiculous by learning, at least in this country. But this is owing to literary attainments being uncommon among us. To find ourselves possessed of superiority in any accomplishment, especially of the mind, is apt to make us vain, and vanity never fails to make us ridiculous.

Whilst my father argued seriously, Albert, Werter, and Ferdinand, jocularly supported him. Theresa did not fail to remind the gentlemen, that all they said applied just as strongly against them-

selves. “For,” said Theresa, “can any thing in nature be more ridiculous than a learned man, with all his whims, prejudices, and odd notions about him ! I have read of few, who, with all their knowledge, were not the mere slaves of system : so that there,” added she, “I think we have the advantage ; women, in general, are too volatile to be systematic ; I will not take the advantage of saying, that their minds are not sufficiently contracted to be systematic ; for, in my idea, all sentimental system implies a certain degree of contraction.”—Albert would not allow of this conclusion ; he called system the helm of science, and gave us a metaphorical discussion of the subject, in which he displayed more ingenuity than I expected.

I think there is great propriety in giving to our sex every possible advantage resulting from education. It must be recollected that, as we are precluded joining in the common business of life, we must necessarily pass many hours alone : many

of our domestic employments are such as not to require much attention ; and many hours we are obliged to pass without any peculiar object of pursuit. The mind is the most active of all principles : it must be employed ; and surely it is of the utmost consequence that it be employed on proper objects : on objects which education only can supply ; and the more extensive the education, the more inexhaustible the source of contemplation.

It is generally allowed, that there is, in human nature, a propensity to evil ; that the mind not occupied in virtuous, will be employed on vicious, pursuits. And hence it is, that vice is generally the daughter of idleness. Viewed in this light, a scientific education seems more essentially necessary to women than to men, their sphere of action being confined to the domestic duties, which presently becoming an almost mechanical routine, leave the mind at liberty to indulge itself in scientific or rational inquiry, or in the reveries of fancy.

The idea, therefore, that the possession

of any accomplishment can tend to weaken virtuous principle, is extremely erroneous. Singing, dancing, playing, exhilarate and expand the mind : they are the most innocent and the most delightful of all our pleasures, and

Where virtue is, these are most virtuous.

-That they are too frequently perverted is too true ; but that is no argument against their excellence ; for is not every blessing liable to abuse ?

As ignorance is a principal source of vice, so knowledge is a principal source of virtue. Let us, then, my Carolina, endeavour to contribute to the happiness of each other, by furnishing ourselves with such ideas as may expand the mind, and strengthen the habits of virtue. Continue, my dear girl, to make your Charlotte wiser and better,—for one, I hope, will be the natural consequence of the other,—by communicating those sentiments, for which I so much admire and love you.
—Adieu !

LETTER XXVII.

IF I did not love my Carolina, could I excuse that excess of praise she bestowed on me in her last letter?—But I do love her, and I do excuse it. The extreme partialities of friendship, though founded on error, should never be regarded as the effusions of flattery, but as proofs of affection: thus, what too frequently excites vanity, would strengthen esteem.

I know, my Carolina, you will not write what you do not think: and yet, I am not vain of your eulogium: for though your heart dictates, it is not because I deserve such praise, but because you love me as I do you—dearly.

I am glad, however, to find that your sentiments on epistolary correspondence, agree with my own. The affectation of what is called ease in writing, disgusts

me extremely: indeed, more than the solemnity of pedantry; as I prefer formality in dress to downright carelessness. Yet this chit-chat way of writing is much in vogue; and this coxcomical kind of negligence is greatly admired by those who write more for the sake of shewing their wit (like people laughing to shew their teeth), than from the impulse of feeling, or any other laudable motive.

I love your mode of writing letters: they resemble yourself—simply elegant and friendly. When I receive a letter from you, I kiss it, and say, “This is my Carolina in miniature.”

Werter would write—nay does write, charmingly; but his imagination gets the better of his judgment, and involves him in description fit only for poetical enthusiasm. The imagination and the taste of Werter would have ranked him among our first poets; but his fancy led him to drawing: and, it must be confessed, that he imitates nature with much success, and selects his objects with happy judgment.

—But I hear him below, and I must abruptly bid you adieu!—I believe there is a fatality in it: he generally comes when I am writing about him—Again adieu!

LETTER XXVIII.

WERTER yesterday commenced his pilgrimage into the mountains. I believe he makes these pilgrimages, as he calls them, about once a quarter. He is an enthusiastic admirer of nature. To ascend lofty mountains, and behold the rising sun ; to wander in unfrequented woods ; to hear the distant cataract :—these are the supreme pleasures of Werter ; pleasures which indicate an expanded mind, and a taste unvitiated.

Indeed, prospects of this kind naturally induce elevated contemplation. To see, as it were, all creation before our eyes, cannot but excite magnificent ideas, and lead the mind to an immediate love and veneration of ‘ the first good, first perfect, and first fair !’—Then it is that we cannot avoid contemplating his goodness and power : every object charms and con-

vinces. And then, my dear Carolina, how sublimely wonderful, how pleasingly awful is it to recollect, that all this profusion of excellence and beauty, this divine union of order and magnificence, sprung from darkness and confusion!

Ere the rising sun
Shone o'er the deep, or mid the vault of night
The moon her silver lamp suspended; ere
The vales with springs were watered; or with groves
Of oak or pine the ancient hills were covered:
Then the great spirit, whom his works adore,
Within his own deep essence view'd the forms,
The forms eternal, of created things,
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains and the streams, the ample stores
Of earth, of heaven, of nature—

What pity is it, that considerations like these, do not perpetually operate on the human mind, to deter us from the paths of folly!—Compared with such as these, how all other objects shrink into insignificance!—

It is thus that the mind of Werter has been elevated. To all that is excellent in

art ; to the communications of philosophy, and the enthusiasm of poetry, he adds an intimate acquaintance with the wonders of creation ; a species of knowledge which never fails to eradicate vanity.

So far from being vain, Werter, I think, entertains too humble an opinion of human nature : an opinion dangerous to inculcate, as it may tend to make us despise ourselves, and, consequently, render us, in some degree, inattentive to our conduct, or, at least, not sufficiently solicitous to obtain the good opinion of our fellow creatures.

A still more dangerous consequence resulting from this idea, is, that, regarding ourselves as dust in the scale of existence, we may be induced to think ourselves unworthy the peculiar protection of Providence : of Him

Who all things form'd, and form'd them all for man !

Indeed, we cannot give way to such opinions, without drawing conclusions too shocking to mention. They who entertain

ideas so gloomy, and who fancy themselves too insignificant to merit the attention of him, by whose breath they were called into being, should recollect, that as nothing was created without his special interposition, so nothing can exist without his special protection, or cease to exist without his special concurrence.

In almost every thing eccentric, Werter's ideas on many subjects soar to a pitch of extravagance that sometimes involves him in contradiction.—And this is not surprizing. So limited is our view, even of terrestrial objects ; so unable are we to account for the most common operations of nature, that when we attempt to speak of mind, it is no wonder we always discover the most childish ignorance ; and that the conclusions of our philosophy are often contradictory to common sense.

Thus, turn which way we will, we cannot but discover our dependence on a ruling power, and the necessity of securing his love as well as his protection.

It is the pride of modern philosophy at

once to exalt and degrade the human species: at once to prove the unlimited extent of the powers of intellect, and to contend for their limited duration; and that sophism is the most universally admired, and those philosophers—as they are erroneously called—the most universally esteemed, whose chief aim is to make us believe the grossest absurdities, and to contradict our own feelings; to divide reason and common sense; to give the passions an unlimited controul; to extinguish the love of virtue, that vice and misery may be universally disseminated, and ‘the image of God’ reduced to an equality with the brutes that perish!—Such, my dear Carolina, are the sublime reveries of modern philosophy!—the offspring of those vices, which seek justification, and scorn repentance.

Pardon me, my dear girl, for repeating what you so well know. And do not think me a professed advocate for what is termed, ‘the dignity of human nature.’—One thing I am sure of: that let meta-

physicians say what they will, great part of our present importance depends on ourselves ; and, serious as the truth is, our future dignity or degradation will be determined by our own conduct.

Again pardon me, Carolina, for the length of this letter. The subject must be my excuse : it is your favourite theme : and you will receive it with hospitality, though it approach you in a very uncouth form.—The effusions of the moment, I know, are always acceptable to my Carolina.—Adieu !

LETTER XXIX.

I HAD no sooner finished my last letter to you, than I indulged myself in a walk almost as far as the recess, under the row of elms that defend our little mansion from the chilling blasts of the east wind. I was alone : Albert had accompanied Theresa to the town, and Werter was not returned from the mountains. The evening was serene : there was that kind of stillness in the air, which inspires melancholy musings, and fills the mind with philosophic tranquillity. The moon was rising, and, by her wan lustre, discovered the grey mists slowly ascending from the lakes on my right hand ; whilst the woody mountains on my left were charmingly diversified with innumerable lights and shades.—“ This scene,” I said to myself, “ this scene, dearest of mothers ! is sacred to thee : under the shade of these

elms, how often have I been blessed with thy blessing!—how often received the instructions of true wisdom!”—The remembrance of those endearing moments filled my eyes with tears: lifting them towards heaven, I could not help uttering aloud one of those spontaneous ejaculations of the heart which draw down blessings, and dissipate distress. My tears relieved me, and the recollection of having obeyed her sacred, her last commands, restored to my mind a melancholy tranquillity.

Turning my eyes towards the mountains, I discovered a man approaching me in great haste. His head was uncovered, and he had the dry stalk of a weed in his hand; the moon shone on his face, and I saw it was the unfortunate Henry, whose passion for me had deprived him of reason.* I was extremely terrified; and he came with so much precipitation, that it was impossible for me to escape, for I

* See Werter, Letter LXXI.

was at the upper end of the avenue.—I therefore stood still.—Poor wretch ! I had no occasion to be alarmed ; he knew me not ; but, looking earnestly in my face, asked me, where his Charlotte was ? —“ She is not at home,” I said.—“ I know that,” replied he, “ I looked all over the hills for her and she is not there. —She was with me last night, and then I shewed her the moon, and played upon this pipe—her eyes danced—it was on the high hill, and we talked to the moon. When the States pay me, I shall buy the golden stars for my Charlotte.”—He smiled as he uttered this. “ Go thy way home, Henry,” I said.—He burst into tears, and I was afraid he recollected me. —“ No,” said he, with a heavy sigh, and a faint voice, “ I am no Henry.” Folding his hands together, and again looking stedfastly in my face, whilst the tears ran down his own, he said, “ There is no Henry—Henry died when the wind whistled in the great tree, and the white clouds took Charlotte to the stars”—He

turned his eyes towards the sky, and never saw I so true a picture of settled melancholy : there was a wonderful expression of sadness in his countenance.—“ Alas, poor youth !” I said, “ go home to thy mother.”—He again looked at me with great earnestness, and, in a kind of half whisper, said, “ These things must not be known to the Princess ; she will be angry when she knows Henry is dead, and there are no flowers—hush !—the moon whispers to Charlotte ;—I must go.”—Then, putting the forefinger of each hand to his lips, he stepped slowly away, as one walks across a room where others are asleep.

I saw him at a considerable distance, going in the same manner, till he entered the wood. The air grew cold, and the wind began to rise. I returned home with a mind full of melancholy reflections.—Poor youth ! may HE—who alone is able—restore thee to thyself, and give thee that sweet peace which forms the sovereign balm to all afflicted minds !

LETTER XXX.

YOUR heart bleeds, you say, for the wandering Henry ; and you complain that, in my last letter, I left you in a scene of exquisite distress. “ The poor wretch,” you add, “ was entering the wood, when the air grew cold, and the wind began to rise ;” and you are solicitous to know what became of him ; and the particulars of that unfortunate attachment which has reduced him to his present state of misery. You may be sure that I should have sent somebody after him, had it been necessary ; but he is so well known all over this part of the country, that his wanderings are not attended with much danger. I never think of him but with extreme commiseration ; and had I, by any word or action, given him the least ray of hope, I should now be the most miserable of women.

He was my father's secretary, and discovered a turn for business and literature, that might have rendered him respectable to society, and happy in himself. He came very young into the family, and was not long before he was able to support his mother decently. He was mild in his disposition; of little conversation; and dedicated most of his leisure time to the classics. Albert discovered in him those qualities which my father disregarded, and accommodated him with books. He read Italian, and his favourite poet was Petrarch; a writer whose language fascinates, and whose images allure.

With an imagination thus stored, with feelings thus refined, and with a taste for the polite arts, it is no wonder that Henry, at eighteen, should be susceptible of the most delicate of all passions. Albert said, that Henry wanted nothing but a mistress to make him a poet: "He has," said Albert, "all the materials in his composition; and when a spark from the brilliancy of some female eye, has set them in a flame,

we shall have German sonnets and elegies in abundance!"—But Albert was deceived; the passion operated differently on Henry. Instead of animating him to poetical flights, it plunged him into the depths of melancholy. Every one perceived a change in him, and every one assigned a different cause for it. He neglected his books; he shunned company; was frequently discovered in tears; and seemed to delight in nothing so much as rambling in the neighbouring woods. The general opinion was, that he had injured his intellects by too much application to study. In this state of mind, however, he did not neglect his duty: he went through the usual business of the day almost mechanically; for though he committed no errors, he did not appear to think of what he was doing. When asked the reason of his melancholy, he would seldom answer, but blushed extremely, and found some excuse to get away.

As he lived with his mother, and only attended my father at certain hours, it was

seldom that I saw him ; but when I was told of the nature of his melancholy, and the particulars I have mentioned, I had no doubt of the cause of his complaint ; and went privately to his mother, and informed her of my thoughts. She said that it was impossible, from his conversation, to guess what it might be, but strongly suspected it was the effect of studious application ; and had he been inclined to metaphysical inquiries, or abstract sciences, I should certainly have joined the general opinion. Besides, she added, that he had not, in any manner, discovered a partiality for any particular person. This shook my opinion considerably ; and I returned home, without being able to draw any certain conclusion.

Soon after this, my birth-day was kept, and, as was usual, all the family, of which Henry was reckoned a part, and many of the neighbours, dined with us. As there was something very mysterious in the distemperature of Henry, I was determined to observe him with attention, and

to endeavour to make some discovery, by oblique conversation.—How I succeeded must form the subject of my next letter; for here I have scarcely room to add with what sincerity and affection, I am yours.

LETTER XXXI.

WERTER has been here, and prevented my writing to you so soon as I intended. I will now proceed with the story of Henry, on whose behalf you express yourself with so much feeling. Believe me, he is worthy of your commiseration.

It was not till after a peremptory command from my father, that Henry could be prevailed on to dine with us. He had much rather have amused himself in the woods. My father's command, however, was not to be resisted; and Henry dined with us.—I was shocked to see him so pale; and privately told Albert my opinion, that Henry was in love.—“Henry,” I said, “if this were the proper season of the year, I should say, you had robbed the garden of all the snow drops.” This brought the colour into his cheeks so much, that Albert said, “You mean

the beet-root, Charlotte, for the colour is high, and I suppose temporary." This occasioned a general smile, and heightened the confusion of Henry. I pitied him, and was sorry for what I had said. He hung down his head, and I could just see so much of his eyes, as to perceive a starting tear. I wished to relieve him; when Albert added, "I suppose Henry has changed complexion with some delicate girl."—"No," said I, "Henry is too great a favourite with the muses, to hold intercourse with mortals.—Pray, Sir," I added, "to which of the nine do you give the preference?"—"Madam," replied Henry, "when I am reading Petrarch, I cannot but adore the muse that gives language to the inspirations of love; but when I am so happy, madam, as to hear your harpsichord, I am sensible of the immediate presence of the charming muse that fills the soul with harmony, and I anticipate the bliss of immortality."—This was too elegant a compliment to pass unnoticed. "Sir," said I, "that is

a poetical effusion so much in my favour, as to merit my best curtesy : it is a Parnassian flower of the most delicate cultivation.”—This threw him into confusion again ; but Frederick taking up the conversation, Henry had time to recover himself.—“ It is a difficult thing, sometimes,” said Frederick, “ to make a proper distinction between the weeds and the flowers of Parnassus : so difficult, that I have known many prefer the former to the latter ; nay, I believe, most young people do.” — “ Frederick,” I said, “ don’t be so severe upon Henry’s compliment and my judgment.”—“ Nay, madam,” replied he, “ you interrupt me before I declare my opinion : I was going to say, it was a nosegay presented from one muse to another.”—“ You are right ;” said Albert, “ though I think Henry the most of a muse of the two, if we can admit the idea of a male muse ; the muses never write themselves : and if Henry possesses their power, he is not destitute of their indolence.”—“ Probably,” I said, “ Henry

has written something.”—“Madam,” replied Henry, “be assured I have not : though I love the muses, the muses love not me ; and I must confess, that I think all human language inadequate to express the feelings on *some* poetical occasions.” This gave Frederick an opportunity to exercise his raillery respecting Henry’s feelings, and from thence adverting to his melancholy. But as I think nothing so inhuman as sporting with the feelings of others, I presently put an end to the conversation, by starting a general subject.

My father had, all this time, been engaged in discourse with W. Selftadt, about English horses ; so that Henry’s confusion and compliments had escaped his attention ; and it was well they did, for it would not have been in my power to have stopped *his* raillery. You, my dear Carolina, have more than once felt the effects of my father’s satiric jocularity.

From what I had observed, no doubt remained with me respecting Henry’s

melancholy. But I was extremely concerned to find myself the cause of his misery ; and began to consider in what manner I should act, so as to relieve him from his distress, without injury to my own feelings. It was at this time, my dearest friend, that I wanted your counsel and assistance. I had nobody in whom I could repose confidence : Theresa was in the town, and you was then in England. —I considered Henry's natural disposition and acquirements, and I found that they all contributed to root the passion in his heart. I well knew that it would be the height of cruelty to treat it with derision ; and I fancied that I knew enough of the human mind, to use him with respect, without flattering him with hopes that could never be realized.

L E T T E R X X X I I .

SHE must be strangely destitute of feeling, who, conscious that she is beloved by another, withholds from her lover, that share of respect and complaisance to which he would be entitled, and which she would pay him, as a visiting acquaintance. Though this conduct is very common, there is in it something extremely ridiculous, and, in my opinion, extremely wrong. Notwithstanding the difference of our situations, and that this kind of conduct might not, according to general construction, appear improper in me, I determined not to add to the sufferings of Henry by adopting it.

I had now made a considerable progress in the English language, and, at the request of Albert, had translated ‘*Hassan*, or the *Camel-driver*,’ the most beautiful eclogue of Collins, one of the modern

English poets; and Albert being impatient for a copy, I sent the translation to Henry, requesting him to transcribe it for me. He soon returned me a copy, and expressed a desire to make one for himself. As I knew that he was fond of the English language, I complied with his request, and when he returned my translation, it was accompanied with some complimentary verses to myself. Unfortunately, the servant, in coming from Henry, was met by my father, who, having occasion to send him elsewhere, took the papers from him, read them, and the immediate dismissal of Henry was the consequence.

The discovery of his passion, and the dismissal from his service, gave a double stab to the peace of Henry: his melancholy increased, and soon terminated in a total deprivation of his reason; his frenzy became desperate; and it was found necessary to have recourse to confinement, and the means usually practised for the relief of the most miserable of the human race. In this unhappy situation he con-

tinued a whole year, and gradually relapsed into his former state of melancholy. In this state he remains : an example of the influence of passion on delicate feelings ; the wonder of the vulgar, and the pity of his friends.

Such, my dearest Carolina, is the story, such have been the sufferings, and such is the situation of the unhappy youth, the object of your inquiry, and of your commiseration. As he was the principal support of his mother, she also became an object of compassion ; and, that best of women, my dearest mother, when Henry became insane, allowed her a decent maintenance ; and since my mother's death, I have added something to her bounty ; and though I have no hope that Henry's mind will ever be re-illuminated with the light of reason, yet I trust that Providence will enable me to protect him from the common ills of life, the bitterness of poverty, and the wanton pastime of unfeeling minds.—Alas ! I cannot do more—I will not do less.—Adieu !

LETTER XXXIII.

YOUR reflections on the story of Henry, do much credit to your understanding, as well as to your humanity ; and your solicitation to contribute to his relief, I regard as a most exalted proof of that friendship for me, which you have ever professed, and from which I have derived no inconsiderable share of my happiness ; and though I well know, that my dear Carolina is “ more willing to give than to receive,” and that no character so well becomes her as that of a benefactress ; yet, having sufficiently provided for Henry, I cannot think of diverting the current of your benevolence from other objects, equally entitled to the tear of compassion, and the relief of generosity.

No, my dear girl—this must not be ;—but as I am unaccustomed wholly to refuse

the solicitations of my Carolina, I will, in some measure, and conditionally, agree to your request.—My dear girl well knows on what terms we hold the breath of existence—"the battle is not to the strong"—the grave may receive Charlotte, and leave Henry destitute.—Need I say more?—I know that my Carolina will become a Charlotte to Henry:—that he will find a protecting angel in her friend, when Charlotte is no more.

LETTER XXXIV.

THE arrival of a Spanish gentleman at the town, who was very particular in his inquiries after Mrs. W. the mother of my Theresa, required her presence there; and Albert staid some days, on business of his own. He is now returned, and Werter continues to visit us as usual. I am greatly at a loss for Theresa, as you may well suppose; though Albert is enough at home to prevent much solicitude respecting Werter. The most cordial friendship subsists between them; and I shall be extremely happy if the love of Werter for Charlotte shall be lost in his friendship for Albert. This could not fail being productive of much happiness; and I trust in Providence it will be so.

I am greatly obliged to my dear Carolina, for the repeated instances I receive of her friendly regard, and estimation of my sentiments. You say right, my dear girl, I am *not* vain of my conquests, as

they are generally called. There can be little merit in a conquest gained without resistance, and where the vanquished prefer chains to freedom. An involuntary passion may excite pity, but that mind must be very weak in which it excites vanity. And yet what is so apt to make us vain, as the idea of having at our disposal, the happiness of others? Where the passion is real, I always regard it in too serious a light to make it an object of vanity; and surely there is a crime in wantonly sporting with the feelings of others. I am, therefore, often surprized and as frequently hurt, by the conduct of those who take delight in exposing the weaknesses of their lovers, without considering, that, at the same time, they expose their own. But when they are charged with the impropriety, the usual apology is, that “they know not the gentleman’s *real* sentiments.” I think a man cannot long feign a passion without being discovered:—a hypocrite is a difficult character to sustain in every thing but religion, as it is more easy to affect

solemnity than passion. Where affection is feigned, coquetry is allowable in those who have inclination and spirits to support it; but I should rather choose to treat pretended love with silent contempt.

You will perceive, my dear friend, that I regard lovers as poor people do beggars: I give them good words, and tell them to go to those who are richer than myself. Indeed, there is self-interest at the bottom of this charity.—I have a wonderful facility in assuming the situations of others, and frequently recollect the language of a certain lover,* who, with no small ingenuity, reminds his mistress, that she may, some time, want the consolation he solicits.

If ever—as that ever may be near—

You meet in some fresh cheek the pow'r of fancy,

Then shall you know the wounds invisible

That love's keen arrows make.

These poetical predictions, you know, are not to be totally disregarded.

* Sylvius to Phœbe, in 'As you like it.'

Vanity, you see, has nothing to do in my system. I regard it as an exotic not worth cultivation ; and when I perceive it budding, I try to pluck it up by the roots, but its texture is such, that it generally breaks in the ground. Sometimes it seems to have lost all power of vegetation ; at others, it shoots up again in an hour. Sometimes it will bud when I am reading English ; but the very sight of a Greek alphabet stops it in an instant.

If there were a possibility of deducing a right to be vain, I should claim mine from having it in my power to call Carolina and Theresa my friends, and Albert, by a dearer name ; for the affection of my female friends, as well as that of Albert, is founded, I trust, on the basis of those qualities of the mind, without which friendship and love have no claim to that permanency by which they are ripened to perfection.—That our friendship, my dear Carolina, may remain durable and happy, is never omitted in the best wishes of Charlotte.

LETTER XXXV.

ALAS, my Carolina!—I flatter myself with hopes that are vain. The passion of Werter, I fear, knows no bounds. Last night, whilst I was playing a pathetic air on my harpsichord, Albert was reading, and Werter leaned on the back of my chair, and turned over the leaves of the music as I played; at last I perceived his hand tremble, and, in turning over the last page, his tears dropped on my arm. I was alarmed, and instantly struck into a lively air, *con spirito*, but confusedly, and, for a moment, in the wrong key. The sudden change, with the dissonance, interrupted Albert, who said, “Why, Charlotte, such a change as that is enough to shake Werter’s nerves to pieces!”—Werter walked about the room in agitation; I played still louder, and Albert resumed his reading.

I was distressed. It is at these mo-

ments that I doubly regret the loss of Theresa's company. I never more anxiously wished for my father to come in. Albert having finished the book he was reading, went up stairs for the next volume.—I expostulated with Werter—“Forgive me, Charlotte,” he said, “forgive my weakness—yet why do I call it weakness?—it is the effect of that attachment which”—“Consider, Werter!” I said, “consider!—and be calm.”—Albert entered the room, and I left off playing. I perceived it was with difficulty that Werter could compose his spirits. Fortunately my father came in, and my alarms were dissipated in general conversation.

The disquietude these scenes give me, is inconceivable; and I look forward with terror to succeeding days.—Say, my Carolina, what can I do?—Albert is impatient—my father solicitous—O, my dear friend! when will my heart find peace again?—when shall it be undisturbed by any emotion, but that of happiness?—

LETTER XXXVI.

THAT our happiness or misery should so frequently depend on others, is the most unanswerable proof that society is the proper sphere of human action; and that he was well acquainted with human nature, who said, "None of us liveth to himself."—To philosophize, you will say, argues a mind at ease:—and the mind of your Charlotte is at ease—Werter is gone.

It is some days since we saw him last.* He met Albert and me at the end of the terrace in the evening: we sat down; but Werter walked backwards and forwards with emotion. I saw his agitation, and attributed it to a painful recollection of past events. My mind, from the same principle, was filled with the image of my dear mother: I spoke of her virtues—source of tender, of inexhaustible contemplation!—I recalled to my memory

* See Werter, Letter xxxvii.

those happy evenings when, sitting round our winter fire, Albert has often thrown aside his books, and received more wisdom from her conversation than they could teach.—“Happy ! happy evenings !” I said, “You, Albert, as one of her children, received her dying benediction : she blessed us—with her last breath.”—Albert embraced me tenderly :—“She did, Charlotte,” he said, “she did, and we *shall* be happy.”—Werter shed tears : I knew not then that they were the tears of separation as well as of sympathy.

A day or two afterwards we received a letter from him, by which we learn, that he is employed in some trust under the Minister. Albert is fearful that the spirit and eccentricity of Werter will militate against his court interest. I hope, however, that business, dissipation, and other objects, will reduce the strength of his partiality for me, into that species of friendship which may contribute to our happiness.—Once more, my dear Carolina, the heart of your Charlotte enjoys domestic peace.—Adieu !

LETTER XXXVII.

THE indisposition of your worthy aunt, is a circumstance that grieves me, not only in itself, but as it deprives me of your promised visit. As you do not come, we shall not go to the ball: for, O Carolina! how shall I mention it?—preparations are making—and the day approaches—*that* day—O my sweet friend!—may happy years succeed it!—

And will you not come, and see your friend, your Charlotte—I cannot write—Albert is gone for Theresa—My heart flutters, my hand trembles—Adieu!—Pray heaven for white hours!

LETTER XXXVIII.

THE ceremony is performed, which binds me for ever to Albert. All my friends were present, except my dear Carolina and Werter. It was my father's pleasure that our nuptials should be public.—And now, my dear girl, the fate of Charlotte,—the important act,—the irrevocable word—is ratified ! Have compassion on poor Adolphus Ferdinand, and accompany your Charlotte on her new journey.—Again adieu !

LETTER XXXIX.

How happily do you unite sincerity and elegance!—Your last letter charms me, and I trust in Providence for the completion of your predictions.—I read a part of it to Albert—“Tell her,” he said, “that I love her, for loving you; and that I will do all in my power to establish her prophetic character, so long as she prophesies felicity to Charlotte.”—And so he will; for my dearest Albert is not the slave of passion. I have witnessed several instances of his steadiness in friendship; and what is love but the most zealous friendship?

The evening before the ceremony took place, Albert, with great good humour, observed, that it sometimes happened, women had favours to request, or rather, said he, orders to give to their intended husbands, which, being neglected a cer-

tain time, were not always complied with. “Now,” added Albert, “I know that my dear Charlotte will never ask of Albert in vain, because she will never make an improper request; but as the last compliment I can pay her as a bachelor, I beg of you, Charlotte, to make some demand, in complying with which, I may conclude the services of a lover before marriage.”

I was happy in this opportunity of mentioning a circumstance that I had often wished, but did not know how, to introduce.—“Yes, Albert,” I said, “I will ask a favour of you, a serious favour.” —“What, Charlotte?”—he said, with impatience, for he saw I was agitated—“what does my dear Charlotte ask?”—“O Albert!” I said, “in our happiness let us not forget the miseries of others:—you know not Albert—neither does my father know—that I am the only guardian except heaven—the sole guardian of poor Henry—unfortunate and innocent.”—“Had it been a stranger, nay, and un-

worthy too," said Albert, " I should have confirmed thy bounty ; but for the poor young man, whose sufferings arise from a love for Charlotte, I will provide him amply ; and I am happy Charlotte," he added, " I am happy you have mentioned it."

This, my dear Carolina, was my last request. Albert has provided for Henry and his mother : they can never want the common comforts of life. You cannot conceive how this action endeared Albert to me : it gave ease to my mind ; and added lustre to the torch of Hymen.

LETTER XL.

ALWAYS happy to meet the wishes of my dear friend, the following are the lines written to me by the unfortunate Henry, which discovered his passion to my father, and occasioned his dismissal. You will recollect, that they accompanied my translation of *Hassan*, which I would have also sent, but think it too imperfect.

Go, simple verse, with Charlotte's matchless strain,
—The humble daisy with the eglantine—
Reveal what artless Henry strives to hide:
Reveal the woe that drowns this heart of mine.

Tell her, 'tis not alone the favour'd rose
That drinks the nectar of the morning dew :
The lowly field-flower sinks with liquid pearl,
And in the blessing finds affliction too.

'Tell her, the lowliest of the admiring throng,
Whose verse her flattering kindness taught to flow,
By fortune banish'd from the soothing smile,
In secret sorrow muses o'er his woe.

So when the choristers of vocal woods
Have sung their amorous songs the live-long day,
Sad Philomela to the night complains,
And lonely warbles on the cheerless spray.

Sweet, sorrow-breathing bird ! O might my strain
In aught but melancholy equal thine,
Then should that pity which thy song inspires,
That pity then should sooth this breast of mine.

But me no muses taught with skilful strains
To mock the harmony of heavenly spheres ;
The muse of melancholy blots my verse,
And brings no other aid than sighs and tears.

On earth no garland grows for this sad brow ;—
For me, alas ! the fates unkindly wove
The sable cypress of consuming grief
With thy sweet rosebuds, hope-deluding love !

A heaven, O Charlotte ! is thy matchless form,
Where dwell those powers that are more divine :
There the illumin'd star of science glows ;—
The graces in a constellation shine !

I hear harmonious sounds—'tis Charlotte's voice !—
I hear her strike the sorrow-soothing lyre ;
Ah ! how persuasive is that melting air,
That makes my bosom thrill with new desire !

But, O presumptuous youth! forbear to tell
With what emotions thy fond breast may glow:—
Hide thee, vain youth, in some sequester'd shade,
Where Walheim's waving willows weep thy woe!

You may discover, in this hasty composition, the seeds of genius, which time and cultivation might have ripened to maturity.—Abandoned by reason, the muses have not forsaken Henry ; he sometimes writes, for a few minutes, verses that resemble the united melody of birds : a kind of music without harmony.

LETTER XLI.

YOUR observations on the absence of Werter are very just; and it has been well remarked, that absence does not always eradicate passion. I remember one of the English poets observes, absence acts on the mind of a lover as a tempestuous wind does on flames of fire, which, if weak, are quickly extinguished; but when extended, burn with double fury.—It is upon this principle, I suppose, that the heroines of ancient romance doomed their knights to certain periods of absence: so that every thing we read in those curious productions, are not entirely destitute of nature.

I have just received a letter from Werter,* which affords me some hope of his forming an attachment with a Miss B. of whom he speaks in high terms, and as one whose ideas correspond with his own.

* See Werter, Letter XLII.

His letter, however, is in the same strain of enthusiasm as usual, and he regrets his absence from Walheim. I wish the charms of Miss B. may reconcile him to his situation.

We have—or more properly Theresa has had, a visitor from the town : Ernestus M.—He is a lover of Theresa's, but, unfortunately for him, he is a great beau ; a species of animal to which Theresa has an invincible antipathy. Certainly, a minute attention to external ornament indicates interior imbecility. But allowance, I think, ought to be made for situation and circumstances : a continual residence in a town, may demand that attention to dress, which, in the country, would be totally unnecessary ; I mean in a certain class of people, whose business it is to engage respect, and to conciliate esteem ; with a gentleman it can make no difference : he will always be well dressed ; but when he makes even a splendid appearance, it will be without a single article that goes towards constituting a beau.

A man of this stamp is incapable of love ; and Ernestus M. knows so little of it, that he cannot even assume a passion, which, we are told, “all can feign, but few can feel.” A total neglect of self, is a common consequence of real affection for another ; but this kind of gentry no sooner conceive a *penchant*, as they term it (beaux always speak French, you know) —than they endeavour to shew it by a particular attention to their own persons ; as if, like the sun, they were determined to melt one by the glare of their appearance. And this is the case with Ernestus M. who came here so outrageously genteel, that Theresa affected not to know him, and his introductory compliments, of course, being lost, I never saw any body look so foolish, and could scarcely refrain laughing.

How odious is affectation ! To see this man now, incapable of any one generous idea, destitute of all those nice distinctions, that delicacy of sentiment, and elegance of accomplishment, which are

requisite to excite even attention in such a mind as Theresa's : to see such a man, tricked out in the tinsel frippery of a town beau, come on a serious embassy to Theresa W. !—affecting to shew his attachment by ogling with eyes in which no expression is to be found, but that of self-complacency ; by smiles which degenerate into a grinning, expressive of consummate felicity for the possession of some rare qualities, invisible to every one but himself !—To see all this is enough to exhaust the patience of a stoic : “ But to be the object of such addresses,” Theresa says, “ is surely a punishment for sin, and a warning sent from heaven, to guard one against the horrible crimes of hypocrisy and affectation !”

“ And why,” said I, “ of hypocrisy ?—perhaps the man loves you, though he has a mighty silly way of shewing it.” —“ It is impossible ;” replied Theresa, “ he may, indeed, have some real regard to what little fortune I possess ; but if he is capable of any friendly attachment,

which, however, I do not allow, it is already in the possession of another lady : a lady previously attached to a gentleman of a quite opposite character. His name is Antonine ; her's Adelaide. Ernestus was introduced to Adelaide as the friend of her lover, and, like the serpent in Paradise, he determined on the seduction of Adelaide, and so far succeeded, that Antonine presently discovered he had lost both his mistress and his friend. Nothing," added Theresa, " could equal the misery of Antonine, as you may readily conceive, when I tell you, that he resembled Werter in almost every thing, but abilities. To find himself one day the happiest of men, and counting on long years of felicity to come—and the next, destitute of all that, in his eyes, could give a charm to existence ; to think that he, who had been an object of envy, must never again feel that peace, which is the balm of life ; that a perpetual separation must take place, and the hands of Antonine and Adelaide never be rejoined ;—

that every thing was sacrificed to the vanity of a wretch, incapable of setting a proper value on what Antonine esteemed beyond all riches; for the vanity of an amour with Adelaide was all the happiness Ernestus could know:—the contemplation of these objects induced Antonine to retire into this neighbourhood, with a resolution never to revisit a place which must remind him that he once was happy, and redouble those inexpressible sorrows, which a mind like his must suffer from divided affection.”

“ Indeed, Theresa,” I said, “ I pity Antonine; and if he is, as you say, in this neighbourhood, let us endeavour to administer to his relief, by making him one of our musical party; for, by your description, his acquaintance is not altogether unworthy of cultivation.”—“ I know him,” replied Theresa, “ and will introduce him, and you will then be able to judge whether I have done him justice in a little poem I am writing, under the title of *Antonine and Adelaide*.”

“ But how is it, Theresa,” I said, “ that you permit so unworthy ”—She interrupted me : “ Make yourself easy, my dear Charlotte ; I fancy the presence of Ernestus will never again contaminate Walheim on *my* account.”

Such, my dear Carolina, is the visitant we have had, and, I thank heaven, are never likely to have again !—Be grateful to Providence, Carolina, that Adolphus Ferdinand is not a beau !—Adieu.

LETTER XLII.

So you compare Walheim to those mountains, in which Don Quixote met with Cardenio, Dorothea, and various other lovers—and I must confess, that, what with your Ferdinand—whom you have left out of your catalogue of Walheim swains—Henry, Antonine, &c. we are as much haunted with romantic lovers, as any spot on *modern* plains. I think it would not only be charitable, but a kind of justice in you, to come and claim your own share of the spoil, or it may chance to go astray and be lost.

You complain of me, and say, I am indolent, or that I should write more frequently. But you know how my attention is taken up with the children; and I am unwilling to resign, even to Theresa, any part of my charge—the sacred charge of the best of parents.—When I cut their bread and butter with my own hands, and see them all smiling around me—when at

night they all kneel before me, and lisp the prayers their dear mother taught them, I think her blessings descend from heaven, and I feel my heart glow with the melancholy rapture of a pilgrim surrounded by the precious relics of a departed saint.

As Albert predicted, so it is: the forms and ceremonies of a court ill agree with the liberal temper of Werter, and we daily expect him at Walheim. Besides, the natural contempt he cannot but entertain for such as he must necessarily have associated with, and his aversion to a life of dissipation, he is urged by the peculiarity of his taste, to seek those shades wherein he may indulge his meditative fancy, and contemplate the beauties of the universe. Whether he has resigned or not, I cannot tell. I hope, however, to find, that Miss B. has had some influence on his heart.—Be this as it may, fortunately for me, I have Theresa, who wishes to see my dear Carolina as the friend of her Charlotte, and to embrace her as one deserving *many* friends.—Adieu!

LETTER XLIII.

WERTER has not only resigned, but is now at Walheim. He paid us his first visit yesterday. "Once more," he said, "I am come to enjoy a life of rationality. Like a knight-errant, I have been in quest of adventures, and met with nothing worth combating; and as to happiness, I can find it nowhere but at Walheim."—"What!" said Theresa, "no windmills?"—"Yes," replied Werter, "the windmills of prejudice, formality, and folly: I did indeed attack one or two; but it was an infant contending with Hercules."

"There is no true felicity," added he, "but in the country, when you are so happy as to meet with friends who can enter into your sentiments, and have a relish for intellectual pleasures, without which there can be no real happiness in existence. All the comforts of this world,"

he continued, “are comprized in a few things, elegantly described by an English poet,* who seems to me to have perfectly comprehended the true nature of social pleasure.

An elegant sufficiency, content,
Retirement, tranquil quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
Progressive virtue——

“Most of these advantages,” said Theresa, “may be found in towns.”—“Happy they!” replied Werter, “who find them there, or any where!—But the attention of people residing in towns is generally directed to other objects: the petty vanity of aping the manners of a court; the perpetual contention for interest; the bustle of trade; and the vulgar prejudice, that wealth can procure every thing, when, on the contrary, it generally extinguishes all desire of intellectual attainment;—all these,” said Werter, “are causes that,

* Thomson.

with many others, operate against the cultivation of those virtues and that disposition of mind, that form the felicity of which I am speaking. Besides," continued he, "these things, like baleful weeds, choak the tender plant of friendship: you rarely know it flourish in towns, even amongst your own sex; when I see an instance of tender friendship subsisting in a great town, I think it is like discovering a sweet violet in a forest overrun with brambles and brushwood. And without friendship," he added, "though so few in the world know more of it than the name, I do not allow a possibility of happiness:

Is aught so fair,
In all the dewy landscape of the spring,
In the bright eye of Hesper or the morn,
In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
As virtuous friendship?

"But what is peculiarly grateful to me," said Werter, "is the opportunity the country affords of perpetually contem-

plating the beauties of nature. There are few of the pursuits of a town life that do not contract the mind ; and nothing more so, than the regular routine of that silly dissipation, in which amusement is sought but never found. I pity those of any liberality of sentiment, who are confined to such miserable drudgery. The feelings I most delight in," added he, " are those I experience, when in a fine morning, I ascend a mountain that commands an extensive prospect of woods and waters—I look around me, and my heart glows with universal benevolence. My mind expands with the prospect before me, and I forget all the petty distinctions of mortality, by contemplating the whole globe as one spot—as a little paradise, diversified with innumerable beautiful objects, which receive additional splendour and cheerfulness from the rays of a refulgent sun :—But when I descend again, and mix among mankind, my paradise, which in the eye of philosophy is at most but a point, becomes still smaller, and I find it

only at Walheim. You cannot blame me then," he said, smiling, "if, like the dove from the ark, after in vain seeking for repose elsewhere, I return to the spot where I know it may be found."

My father and Albert soon after came in, and received Werter with great friendship ; but I discovered embarrassment in the countenance of Werter when he complimented Albert on our union ; and I felt my heart sink within me, when I saw him give a significant glance at my ring, which, I believe, he had not noticed before.

I have since been reflecting on Werter's idea of situation, as it respects happiness ; and I cannot say, that I think external objects can have so much influence as he ascribes to them. Felicity must originate, and have its residence in the mind,* and is to be acquired only by

* The leading idea of Charlotte's observation is beautifully expressed by Goldsmith :

" Vain, very vain my weary search to find
That bliss which only centres in the mind."

TRAVELLER.

the cultivation of those virtues which, being intellectual, cannot be so affected by external objects, as to lose their nature, or fail of producing their natural fruit, that peace and contentment, which the operation of external circumstances can neither give nor take away.

Add to this, that it is certain happiness is pretty equally distributed among mankind. Like the warmth of the sun, we all enjoy it, but in different degrees, and sometimes with long intervals of darkness. At one time it is obstructed by the passing clouds of providence; at another by the mists of error, and the storms of passion. — That my dearest Carolina may ever enjoy that “sunshine of the breast,” without which the world is a gloomy wilderness, will always be the sincere wish of her affectionate Charlotte.

LETTER XLIV.

ALAS, my Carolina ! I see no change in the sentiments or conduct of Werter. Nothing but the continual presence of Theresa restrains him from the commission of a thousand follies ; and she is obliged to leave Walheim this week ; having effects to receive from Spain, which devolve to her as the only remaining representative of her mother.

Independent of this, our time passes not unpleasantly at Walheim Lodge. The children are quite happy in the return of Werter, who has told them many new stories, and has loaded them with new trinkets.

Our conversations, as usual, turn chiefly on objects of taste, music, and literature ; and you would laugh to hear the arguments of Werter and Albert respecting

Homer and Ossian :* for Ossian, you must know, has supplanted Homer in the good graces of Werter, which not a little exposes him to the ridicule of Albert, who draws comparisons between them highly degrading to Ossian.—“Homer,” says Albert, “is the father of the two most regular and finished poems in the world, in both of which you find all the requisites of the epic : sublime images, nervous and flowery diction, a beginning, a middle, and an end. To these,” adds he, “you oppose a collection of northern ballads, destitute of every principle of an epic poem, except, here and there, a romantic image which pleases an imagination that, like yours, delights in eccentricity.”—Werter, however, has a great deal to say for his friend Ossian. My father, attending particularly to Albert, takes his side of the question, and tells Werter, that he seems to have exchanged “a pocket companion of gold for one of lead.”—“No,

* See Werter, Letter LXI.

Sir," replied Albert, " of lead ore, if you please, for it glitters more than the gold, which is no uncommon thing even with dross."

For my part, I am much pleased with many passages in Ossian; but the perpetual recurrence of the same images, and a continual effort to affect the sublime, so wearies the mind, that I can never read more than a few pages at a time. Ossian resembles a tremendous rock, over-hung with waving woods, where you may discover foaming cataracts, gloomy caverns, and dismal precipices. Homer is like a fertile country, in which you may at once contemplate the variegated beauties of woods and waterfalls; torrents that rush with impetuosity from lofty mountains, and streams that murmur through Arcadian valleys. Like the shield of Achilles, the poems of Homer present the whole world to our view.

LETTER XLV.

I RECEIVED both your letters, my dear friend, and am glad to find you have had a healthful and agreeable journey. Indeed, you have been, what would appear to me, a long, long way; but to you, who are a traveller, I suppose the distance was not extraordinary. I hope you have settled every thing to your aunt's satisfaction; and that your next journey will be to Walheim.

Theresa has been gone upwards of a month; she left us the day after I wrote my last letter to you. She will pass the Christmas holidays with us, when I hope our party will receive the addition of my dear Carolina's company. I am so accustomed to have a companion, that these winter evenings are sometimes dreary; the children go early to bed, and Albert is a good deal engaged. I hope, there-

fore, you will commence your holidays as soon as possible ; in truth, I want your assistance, your advice—for, Werter—O Carolina ! my heart feels heavy as I write the name.

His assiduities are increased, and Albert daily finds him at Walheim Lodge, but always bids him welcome, and has never yet intimated any disapprobation of his visits.

But I see, my dearest girl, I see that this unfortunate passion is making rapid progress in the bosom of Werter. Sometimes, when he sits silent by me, I discover tears in his eyes, whilst they are earnestly fixed on my ring, at which he gazes till the colour forsakes his cheek, and a deep sigh gives him relief. I am obliged to have instant recourse to my harpsichord, and to play some airs, by which he is particularly affected. Fortunately this expedient never fails of the desired effect ; and I cannot help comparing myself to David soothing the passion of Saul. So true is it, that there is divinity in music,

and such is the magic power of harmony !
—When I reprove his weakness, he answers me with sighs, but assures me, he will endeavour to repress every feeling that may disturb our peace.

I remind him of Miss B. “ I love her, my dear Charlotte,” he says, “ because she has a liberal mind, and because she resembles you—So I told you in my letter—and though it carries the appearance of a compliment, yet, believe me, my heart dictates it. Miss B. was to me as a picture of Charlotte, endued with the power of speech.”—“ Miss B.” I said, “ is but little obliged to you.”—“ Indeed, Charlotte,” he replied, “ I told her the same thing ; and so highly does she think of you, that she is proud of being thought like so amiable an original.”—“ 'Tis well,” I said, “ she is not likely to see me, or your judgment, Werter, would suffer very considerably in her opinion. Your partiality,” I added, “ gives grace even to foibles, and thus, beholding with disordered optics, you

misrepresent"—He would not allow the inference ; and I have the mortification to find Miss B. on whom I placed so many hopes, regarded but as a representative of myself.—Thus, from every concurrent circumstance I have reason to fear, that Werter will not speedily regain that tranquillity, which forms the peculiar bliss of those who do not permit passion to usurp the authority of reason.

Advise me, my dear Carolina, what to do. His continuing to visit here, will, I fear, increase the passion that ought to be subdued.

I thank you again and again for your elegant present of English books. I have read a volume of the "Rambler," and observe, that like the "Night Thoughts," every line contains a sentence, and every sentence not only finds its way to the heart, but ought to be registered there.—
Adieu !

LETTER XLVI.

NO, my dear Carolina : music may soothe, but cannot subdue the passions ;— it is, indeed, a medicine of the mind, and perhaps the most efficacious : but though it may administer temporary relief, it seldom removes the disease. Yet, I believe, every syllable I have ever read of its power. And it gives me great pleasure to find it mentioned as a “ sovereign remedy” in diseases more immediately affecting the mind, by the author of the two medical volumes which formed a part of your acceptable and obliging English present, and which I had before read in a German translation.* This elegant writer has observed, that “ the salutary power of music, and its manner of operating on

* ‘ Medical Observations on Diseases peculiar to Women,’ by Dr. John Leake, of Craven-Street; translated into the German, &c.

the body and mind, depend as much upon rational and demonstrative principles, as that of any medicine in the ‘*Materia Medica.*’”—And I have reason to subscribe to the opinion.—“Cicero,” he remarks, “asserts its amazing power, and Plato supposes that the effect of harmony on the mind is equal to that of air on the body. Its divine influence,” he continues, “is exemplified by David, in the cure of Saul ; and the Eastern monarch, who had conquered the world, was himself subdued by the seraphic strains of Timotheus’s harp. It mitigates bodily pain, suspends the malignant force of madness and despair, and lulls the soul into tranquillity and peace. Let us,” he proceeds, “appeal to the refined feelings of those most susceptible of the divine power of harmony, to prove its sovereign influence over the mind : *viz.* that it is the true oblivious antidote ;—the *Nepenthe* of the gods, to heal the wounded spirit, to exalt the mind above low-thoughted care, and lap it in Elysium.”

I am highly delighted with these observations, because they accord with nature, and are founded on just principles. —How exquisite would it be, were all the sciences, without the incumbrance of hypothetical system or professional jargon, thus pleasingly illustrated ! Then, indeed, even we, my dear Carolina, might be tempted to exclaim,

“ How charming is divine philosophy !
Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo’s lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar’d sweets—”*

But you ascribe too much power even to the divinity of music, when you imagine its airs might allay the passion of Werter, as the wand of a magician is supposed to quell a tempest. That it sometimes “ lulls the soul into tranquillity and peace,” I happily experience : but love is a passion—alas ! my dear friend, am I not adding fuel to the flame, by administering the liquid notes of harmony ?—And such

* Milton.

too as Werter has selected !—Since my acquaintance with him, my musical taste has undergone considerable change. Those compositions, whose chief merit consists in difficulty of execution, and which I took a pride in performing, are totally rejected for the simple strains of ancient melody, which touch the ear with exquisite sweetness, and find access to the inmost recesses of the heart ; and indeed, what is that music or poetry good for, which produces no effect on the mind ?—There is very little modern music that Werter will sit to hear : he says, it is like Gothic architecture, whose parts, instead of captivating, serve to puzzle and confound ; whilst the harmonious strains of antiquity, like the Grecian temples, charm us by an union of grandeur and simplicity.

Indeed, simplicity ought to be the leading principle, not only in all the arts, but in life itself ; and happy they, who, in their mortal conduct, follow simplicity : for “ all her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace !”

LETTER XLVII.

ADIEU ! a long adieu to the white hours of domestic peace !—O, my Carolina ! I stand on a fearful precipice, and find no friendly hand to snatch me from the dismal prospect !—Condemn me not, my dearest girl—condemn not your Charlotte—she is innocent, and unhappy.

I see and pity the sufferings of Werter :—though pity be allied to love, yet friendship sure may pity :—I pity him, Carolina, and my heart sinks when I see him. Miserable and dejected, he strives in vain to hide a passion which consumes him.—His countenance is pale ; his spirits sunk, and he no longer joins society with cheerfulness. Even in these cold nights, the moon only witness to his woe, he wanders o'er the hills of Walheim, and sighs to the blast that whistles through the leafless trees.—Indeed, indeed, Carolina, I

cannot but pity him.—His time, his youth, is wasted in a vain pursuit; his spirits destroyed; his life, perhaps—O, my Carolina! am I the cause of all his misery?—and can I be happy?

I do not remonstrate in vain. Alarmed, lest Albert should notice the foolish extravagancies he daily commits, and attribute them to the real cause, I reproved Werter for his excesses, and pointed out to him the fatal consequences of a conduct so incompatible with my peace. As if passion were to be eradicated by impairing reason, he drank wine to excess, and endeavoured to seek consolation in forgetfulness.* To see him thus enervate his intellectual faculties, and injure his health, gave me pain, and I dissuaded him from it; for though wine may drown the finer feelings, it will not extinguish passion.

“O Charlotte,” he said, “let me indulge myself in forgetting every thing: even in forgetting you, the best and dearest

* See Werter, Letter LXVII.

of women!—let me forget all your charms, and all your goodness; for every tender recollection”—“Do not,” I said, “do not pursue this course;—Think of Charlotte!”—For, if I can by any means turn his passion to his own advantage, am I not right to do it?—But to find that I have this influence makes me unhappy.

My dear Carolina!—friend of my heart!—thou, who in knowing, sharest all my sufferings, with Charlotte bend the knee to Providence, for the restoration of sweet tranquillity!—I ask not happiness—Illumine once more, O heaven! with the cheering rays of thy peace, the sorrowful bosom of Charlotte!

L E T T E R XLVIII.

It will not be, my Carolina ! I ask too great a bounty at the hand of heaven : every thing concurs to make me wretched. —Alas ! there is no peace for Charlotte.

Werter has seen him, Carolina ! he has seen Henry !—“ Were I like *him*,” he said, “ I should be happy ; he knows not his wretchedness : in his bosom there is room for hope : he climbs the wild rock to gather flowers in winter ; but I have no object ; I wander”—“ Why, Werter,” I said, “ why will you seek every opportunity to aggravate distress ?”—He interrupted me : “ There is but one way, to be like him—there is but one way for Werter to be as happy as Henry.”—“ What do you mean, Werter ?” I said, and held him my trembling hand—“ Alas !” he replied, “ that the possession of this boasted reason should be given us

only to distinguish, and to adore the excellencies we cannot obtain !”—“ Indeed, Werter,” I said, “ you are not well ; repose yourself : ”—and I flew to my liarsichord. I could hardly play ; but, that he might not imagine I regarded anything he had said, I attempted to sing one of his favourite airs. He sat, and looked at me, as I have seen Henry look ; and when I had finished the air, he said, “ Charlotte is kind : she comes like a ministering angel of light, and, with seraphic strains, leads my mind from woe :—thanks, my dearest Charlotte—I breathe again ! ”—

Fortunately the children came in from walking, and by their innocent prattle, diverted his attention. The whole cry was for a story : “ Tell us the story of the prince that was served by dwarfs,” said Josephina.—“ No, no,”—exclaims Maria, who can hardly speak plain yet, “ Tell us the story of the little boy and the giant.” The little boy and the giant carried the day, and Werter told it with so much solemnity, that though they had

heard it twenty times before, they were wonderfully silent. Maria sat on his knee, and all the rest stood round him, with their eyes fixed on him, delighted to hear how the little boy got into the giant's castle, and took away all his fine things ; " which he could never have done," said Werter, " if he had not been a very good boy ;"—for, to tell children a story without a moral adapted to their capacities, is giving them unwholesome food ; it is sowing tares without wheat, and planting shrubs that will bear neither fruit nor foliage.

The children were no sooner put to bed, than Albert came in, and I thought he looked coolly on Werter. I believe I was mistaken, for I afterwards found, that he had been engaged in business, that had, in some degree, ruffled his temper. As I knew Werter was ignorant of the cause of Henry's wretched situation, I retired the moment I heard that unhappy subject introduced.—It is impossible, my dear Carolina, to describe the perturba-

tions I experienced during this interval. I considered the impressions every word would make on the mind of Werter, already agitated with the sight of the miserable sufferer.—I went into my chamber, and, reflecting on my situation, I could not refrain tears, and, on my knees, to ask of Providence the blessing of his protection, and to shower on our afflicted minds the reviving dews of heavenly tranquillity.—And surely heaven heard my prayers, for when I returned, Werter seemed composed ; but on leaving us, gave me a look that affected me, as if I were conscious of having committed some crime.—Thus it is, my Carolina, that my feelings are, as it were, played upon, and every note, alas, strikes sorrow to my heart.—Adieu, my dearest friend, once more adieu !

LETTER XLIX.

Too well I know the heart of Werter, my dear Carolina, too well, alas, I know his heart, to follow your friendly counsel.—My mind misgives me when I think of telling him not to waste his time at Walheim Lodge.—The excess of his passion, Carolina—I shudder but to think of it!—

I have reason, Carolina, to imagine fearful things. And though I am depressed and spiritless, so far, alas, from following your counsel, I receive him with borrowed smiles—yes, your once lively Charlotte is a stranger to the sweet emotions of heart-felt cheerfulness—and treat him with mild complacency.* This conduct might appear blameable in the eyes of a stranger; but my Carolina knows my heart. We must suit our

* See Werter, Letter LXIX.

actions, so as that they never deviate from the line of rectitude, to the exigencies of time.—O heaven ! that ever Charlotte—my heart, be still !

The story of Henry has made a deep impression on the mind of Werter.—“ Nothing,” he said, yesterday, “ nothing but his happy translation”—*happy* he called it !—“ could have made existence sufferable: yet I endure”—“ Werter,” I said, “ you seek distress, and indulge yourself in imaginary woes.”—Imaginary ! Charlotte ?”—and, lifting up his eyes, he added—“ O God ! thou hast pitied Henry—thou hast taken him from himself—but Werter”—“ Forbear Werter,” I said, “ forbear this wild extravagance: I must not hear you; it is cruel to remind me of Henry’s sufferings.”—“ Can Werter then,” he said, “ be cruel to Charlotte? he whose life is not worth a thought, who”—“ Pardon me, Werter,” I said, “ a life like yours, which might be rendered an ornament to society”—“ Alas!” he replied, “ the existence of

any human creature is of little moment : as every tree adds to the shade of the forest, so one being adds to the number of society ; but he falls like a plant in an unknown valley, unnoticed, and quickly forgotten.”--“ Nay, Werter,” I said, “ you do wrong to society : no man falls unnoticed, nor unregretted ; we bedew with tears the pale corse, and remember with tenderness the virtues that gave loveliness to life. But if it were not so, think,” I added “ think, Werter, of the consequence of life in the eye of heaven—of him who regardeth even the fall of a sparrow !” Taking hold of my hand, and kissing it, he said, “ It is in your power, Charlotte.—If, indeed, all society were like yours—who would not wish for life, when to live would be to enjoy happiness ?” —“ These compliments, Werter,” I said, “ are due elsewhere.”—“ Compliments !” —he exclaimed, and began to walk hastily about the room. At that instant Albert came in, and relieved me from a conversation that exceedingly oppressed me.

Always welcome, my dear Albert!—
How thy steady mildness, and the serenity
of thy reason, charm away the perturba-
tions of my mind, and restore half its
infant peace to my throbbing heart ;*—
Thou com'st like the smiling blushes of
the breezy morning, after a tempestuous
night.

Do not censure me for rejecting your
counsel. I give thee, my dearest girl, a
thousand thousand thanks for thy good
wishes.—Is there no certain course?—To
temporize is dangerous.—Whilst Werter
regards society with indifference, and is
“at war with himself”—do you not see
the fatal tendency of his sentiments?—O
Carolina!—I tremble as I write—Adieu!

* In this, as well as several other passages, the
language is too poetical for epistolary composition.
It may, however, with justice, be remarked, that it
is a prevailing fault among young writers, to give
into this kind of diction, especially those whose
reading, like Charlotte's has been chiefly confined
to the poets.

LETTER L.

How dangerous is that philosophy which lends its aid to melancholy, and dresses creation in the robes of sorrow!—which extinguishes the lambent flame of cheerfulness, and sinks in clouds the glimmering star of reason!—This is that fatal philosophy which, instead of repressing, gives internal succour to the passions, and adds the influence of sentiment to the emotions of desire; and—O my Carolina!—this is the philosophy of Werter!

To-day again—"I see Charlotte," he said, "I plainly see what is the destiny of man:—he must fill up the measure of his sufferings, and drink the bitter draught;—none are excluded from this—the lot is universal; and had I not the mournful privilege to bathe this hand with tears"—I interrupted him: "Indeed, Werter," I said, "Providence is kind to

all; — what ‘ though sadness tarrieth through the night, joy cometh in the morning;’—but you, Werter, have no right to utter the language of complaint; you, whose mind is enlarged, and who have faculties to enjoy every intellectual blessing.—Consider, Werter,” I added, “ consider the thousands that pine in want, that sicken with disease, to whom the sun brings no comfort, and the night no repose—others, to whom the world is a dreary wilderness through which, with sorrowful hearts, they wander, and find ‘ not where to lay their head,’ till, destitute and comfortless, with no pitying voice to soothe their sorrows, no kind hand to relieve their wants, they sink, with eyes uplifted to the ruling power, and they expire, Werter, without a murmur—nay, they bless the hand that afflicts—and shall we, Werter,”—“ O Charlotte!” he said, “ it is hard to know the human heart; they that thus wander in misery, and embrace their woe, find some secret charm in existence, and clasp the imaginary good

till it deserts them.”—“ Yes, Werter,” I replied, “ there is a secret charm that weds them to their woe : the ‘ still small voice ’ that whispers comfort, and tells them that felicity is the attendant of submission ; and vain is that philosophy, Werter, which, by expanding the mind, weakens principle.”—“ I boast not of philosophy,” he said, “ *my* mind, Charlotte, admits not of its comforts : one image only dwells there—the whole world affords no diversity to me—’tis a blank”—“ Where, Werter,” I asked, where is that spirit of genius, and that love of nature from which you derived unspeakable pleasures ?—where the friendly cheerfulness that gave delight to our evenings, and made winter pleasing ?—Indeed, Werter,” I added, smiling, though my heart was full, “ Indeed, you must be corrected :—is it not childish, for the want of some particular object, to reject all the blessings that surround us ?—we cannot enjoy perpetual sunshine.”—“ Go on, dearest of women,” he said, “ go on : I can bear this from

you, because you, Charlotte, are that one object for which I have patience to look on others—but when I leave you, my dear Charlotte, then all my resolves vanish—I see your image—your voice continues to charm me—every thing affects my heart, but those precepts that would instil forgetfulness, and make me look on Charlotte with indifference: I cannot,” he added, “Charlotte, I cannot, forget; and whilst I remember, I must be miserable.”—“Come, Werter,” I said, and I gave him my hand, “I am sure your health is impaired, and you expose yourself too much to the rigour of the wintry elements: let your friendship for us, induce you to be more careful of yourself.”—

Having said this, I went to my harpsichord, and played some lively airs.—How I learn to deceive myself!—whilst my fingers strike the notes of joy, my heart throbs with woe!—Alas, my Carolina! will it never again feel the vibration of rapture?

LETTER LI.

I WAS not mistaken — Carolina, my misery is complete!—Albert—how shall I write, whilst my eyes stream with tears, and my hand trembles thus?—Albert—O, Carolina! what am I become that Albert—my heart bleeds,—I cannot write—Gracious God! am I doomed only to create sorrow?

LETTER LII.

HE treats him coldly, yet he finds him here!—Yes, my dearest friend, I am guiltless—Alas, that my hours wore the colour of my thoughts!—I am guiltless, Carolina—but Albert's peace is wounded!—O no!—'tis a fatal delusion: if Charlotte were innocent, could Albert be unhappy?—My thoughts!—heaven only reads my thoughts—heaven only sees my heart.—Albert marks my woe—he sees dimness in my eyes—he hears the sigh I vainly endeavour to suppress—he hears, and thinks it is a sigh to Werter: for—blessed with her Albert—should grief find shelter in the heart of Charlotte?

No, my Carolina, he will not—surely Albert cannot doubt the fidelity of his Charlotte.—He knows her heart—he knows its tenderness.—Its tenderness, Albert! never shall become a weakness:—

“ Affliction may subdue the cheek, but not take in the mind.”—O God! who knowest my heart, strengthen and support it, that—in suffering under thy will—the voice of murmuring may never pass my lips!

Werter sees Albert look on me with the eye of reserve—it pierces him to the heart. He sees he is an unwelcome guest at Walheim Lodge—and yet he is daily here!—Unhappy man! why will he pursue the visionary shade that leads to ruin?

On every side distressed!—The children rejoicing at the approaching festival, call to my remembrance happy, happy hours that are past! Their little hearts exult, and they talk of nothing but Christmas and sweetmeats, and what pleasures are coming, when Carolina and Theresa will bring them toys from the town!—The dear infants cast their wondering eyes on my starting tears; their joy is suddenly suppressed, and their harmless bosoms throb with a sensation they never felt before.—Alas, my Caro-

lina! what has Charlotte done, that heaven thus afflicts her, and all around her?—If I have wandered into indiscretion—and if indiscretion *thus* is punished, what must be the lot of guilt!—Father of mercies!—shield me!

Werter has not been gone long. He was here all the afternoon, and was going before; but I would make him stay till Albert came, to save me the confusion of saying he had been here in Albert's absence.—Instead of conversing with me, Albert takes a book, or amuses himself with the children.—His reserve, Carolina, chills my heart! I see no kindness in his eye. I watch in vain for those glances that speak the silent satisfaction of the soul;—and instead of soothing my mind with music, I retire to indulge myself in tears.

LETTER LIII.

WHERE is the peace that blesses the vacant mind?—Is it the lot of sensibility to be wretched?—Or am I not dead to sensibility?—When I thought I possessed it in a more than common degree, was I not more than commonly happy?—Have I not often said, that even the grief of sensibility is a luxury?

“ Sad luxury! to vulgar minds unknown!”

I feel for the woes of another, and I am wretched.—I am something more than wretched, Carolina :—a new sensation arises in my bosom—I tremble to think!—perhaps it is guilt!—Are then my tears criminal?—are my sighs offensive to heaven?—They are, my Carolina!—for do they not wound the peace of Albert?

How difficult is it, to conduct ourselves with unerring propriety, when the heart is subject to those emotions which tend to an untimely indulgence of even virtuous inclination.

L E T T E R L I V .

IN vain I try to soothe my mind with music. Even the most lively airs add to my melancholy. They recall to my memory past pleasures.

“ Of joys departed, never to return,
How painful the remembrance !”

When the memory is tenacious of past felicity, and hope fails to fill the mind with ideal prospects of future bliss ; then it is, that anguish becomes doubly bitter ; and the retrospection even of innocence, adds new sighs to melancholy, and gives fresh poignancy to grief.—Let the soothing voice of thy friendship, Carolina, calm my troubled spirit, and teach me to regain the consolation—the unspeakable consolation—of a mind at ease !

LETTER LV.

YOUR letter, my dear friend, gives me comfort; but Carolina's letters always communicate a ray of that divine peace, which beams in her own mind.

Werter has not been here to-day, and I feel my heart calm. Albert smiled when he came in, and my bosom, for a moment, fluttered with a sensation it has long been a stranger to. My father too came, and told us, he had found a companion for Werter—"And Werter," Albert said, "would do well to seek company." It was Antonine, whose story my father had accidentally learned, and told to Albert.—I saw it affected him; and, for the first time in my life, I heard him use an acrimonious expression: it related to the conduct of Adelaïde.—As if I had been equally guilty, I felt the severity of his remark, and retired to give relief to my

feelings. This too was the first time my dear father ever administered to the distress of his Charlotte : happily for him, he knew it not.

I cannot subscribe to your opinion, that I should speak to Albert on this unhappy subject. Though the object would be to vindicate my innocence, would not such an appeal imply a degree of self-conviction ? Silence best becomes unaccused innocence.—And if, indeed, it were advisable, how, my Carolina—how should I find words—how find power to utter them ?—Charlotte was never taught the language of supplication, but when she addressed the throne of mercy.

My father inquires after you, my dear Carolina, and depends—as we all do—on seeing you very soon. The winter has not made less havock about Walheim than sorrow has in the bosom of your friend. Your favourite lime trees, at the top of the garden, are blown down ; the waters have done considerable damage, and the river in the valley, on whose

banks we have so often wandered in summer evenings, is now a dreary sea. Too like the change I find in my own mind, I look on it with terror. My eyes search in vain for the objects that diversified the beauties of the valley ;—I see nothing but a solitary tree, reserved, like myself, to be a witness of more woe :—a weeping monument of what has been !

LETTER LVI.

YES; a kind of desolation surrounds me. Nature seems as dead to animation, as my heart to joy. Yet spring shall renew the foliage of the fields, and summer suns shall ripen the harvest of autumn.—Perhaps tranquillity may revisit my bosom, and Charlotte may again be happy.—This is the language of hope:—of hope far distant. The prospect before me is gloomy: it presents scenes of terror—I dread to look forwards—O Thou! at whose word, myriads of worlds rush into existence, and whose smile diffuses joy through all—dispel the gloom of sorrow, and chase from hence the shadow of despair—let cheerfulness revisit my sad bosom, and domestic felicity once more reign at Walheim.

Anxiety, my dearest friend, anxiety preys on my heart. Unknown to me now,

are the delightful pleasures resulting from the cheerful converse of surrounding friends, and the communion of elegant sentiment.—Alas, my Carolina! can I recal the past, without tears?—the days of infancy, when my heart was a stranger to all sorrow, and the smiles of my dearest mother made a heaven indeed!—Why do my tears stream afresh?—Her spirit hovers over me: I hear her voice.—Those are the soothing, the sweetest moments of my life, when, rapt in a pleasing delusion, I see, and I converse with the shade of her whose blessing will preserve me.

“Have I not seen her, where she has not been?
Have I not clasp’d her shadow? Trod her steps;
Transported trod! as if they led to heaven?”*

Had she yet lived;—had Werter known her, he would have revered and loved her. The contemplation of her virtues, the charms of her conversation, would have soothed his mind, and rectified his judg-

* Young.

ment ; and the fancied excellencies of Charlotte would have made no impression on the mind of Werter.

Pardon me, my dear Carolina : pardon this incoherency.—When shall I be able again to write with a heart at ease?—

LETTER LVII.

LIKE those evanescent glimmerings before death, which sometimes flatter weeping friends with illusive hopes, were the serene moments that whispered returning peace to my soul. Alas, they are fled!—and again—

Albert continues to love his Charlotte; he has given ease to her heart even by reproof; it was the reproof of cruelty and tenderness. A day or two ago, when he went out—for he would not see my tears; he would not mark my confusion—as he opened the door, and I could not see his countenance, he said,—“From a regard to appearance only, it would be well, Charlotte, to abate the ardour of your friendship to Werter, and not see him so often.”—It was in vain that I hastened to the door—it was in vain that I cried, “O Albert! hear me!”—he was gone. I ran

up to my chamber-window, and saw him walk with hasty steps from the lodge, and often put his handkerchief to his eyes. It pierced my heart, that the dearest and best of men, should leave his Charlotte thus, and fly from her that should wipe away his tears. I saw him increase the quickness of his walk, as if distance from Charlotte would afford relief to his mind. Alas, I could not see him long!—my eyes streamed:—I sunk on a chair.

When my tears had sufficiently relieved me, and my heart ceased to beat with excess of grief, I determined instantly to obey the command of Albert, and to find out some mode of relieving myself from the visits of Werter. I received consolation from the reflection, that Albert would soon see Charlotte valued his peace, and revered his mandate.

In the evening, before Albert returned, Werter came.—I was preparing Christmas gifts for the children. I thought Werter seemed in better spirits than usual. He talked of the innocent de-

lights of infancy; and said, he envied the happiness of children that were unexpectedly surprized with fruit and sweetmeats, ushered in with wax-lights that communicate a sudden rapture to every countenance: “You, shall have a gift too,” I said; “if you behave well.”—“What do you mean, Charlotte?” he asked. — “Thursday night,” I replied, “is Christmas eve: the children are all to be here—do you come too—but do not come before that time.”—He looked earnestly in my face; I saw his emotion; but I repeated my request. “We must not,” I added, “go on in this manner any longer.”—I found my heart relieved by having said so much. Werter, in great agitation, walked across the room. He gave no attention to several questions that I asked him, but at last said, “Charlotte, I will never see you more!”—“Nay, Werter,” I said, “we may—we must see one another.”—I marked the fire in his eyes, and, taking his hand, I begged of him to be calm, and to conquer an attachment to me, who could only pity him.—

“Do not,” I said “deceive yourself: do not seek your own destruction; why must it be only me—me who belong to another?”—He looked at me with an angry countenance.—The tears of Albert had made too great an impression to be easily effaced, and I continued to entreat Werter to get the better of his unfortunate attachment: I advised him to see more company—to travel. Lifting up his eyes, he said—“A little time, Charlotte and all will be well!”—Again I begged him, not to come before Christmas-eve.

Albert came in: he might easily discover confusion in Werter, and coldly asked him to stay to supper. I wished he would; but dare not join in the request. A painful silence succeeded. Werter’s heart was full; and at last he took leave of us abruptly—I knew it was to hide his tears.

Albert observed his confusion, and attributing it to my having attended to his admonition, became cheerful, but seemed to avoid saying any thing of Werter, who, I told him, would not come again.

till Christmas eve—"I must go, Charlotte," Albert said, to W. Selfadt's; I have neglected that business too long."—I knew, my dear Carolina, of this journey, and that it would detain Albert all night; and I feared it was postponed for a reason which I trembled to think on. This intimation confirmed the idea; and I could not but grieve that Albert should doubt the faith of Charlotte.

Where there is no confidence, there can be no happiness:—and should Albert—can he—alas! what means this pressure of my heart? my mind is guiltless; yet it whispers fearful things.

Now, my Carolina—now it is, that I feel the sacred influence of religious sentiment, and the unspeakable blessing of a spotless mind.—Amidst all my distress, it conveys a sensation which philosophy cannot communicate. It is the holy star that guides my wandering steps, and saves me from despair!

LETTER LVIII

ALL, all, may yet be well, my Carolina.—The absence of Werter affords my mind relief; and Albert loves his Charlotte with tenderness. Theresa will soon be here, and your presence, my dear friend, will add to the pleasures of the approaching festival.

I have not slept of late, till last night, and I had pleasant dreams. Philosophy teaches us to despise the chimeras of fancy, while the poet says, that “dreams descend from Jove.” It is long, my dearest girl, since my mind dwelt on a pleasing idea, and I will, for a moment, indulge myself in the recollection of imaginary bliss.—And what, but imaginary, is the bliss of half the world?—The pleasures of ambition, of pomp, of luxury, all imaginary—all delusive as the visions of a mind disturbed.

My fancy presented a spacious garden, blooming with flowers, and watered with fountains; diversified with shrubberies, and vocal with melody. The lodge and the shades of Walheim seemed afar off. I wandered a considerable time, lamenting the absence of Albert, as we always wish those whom we love best to partake of all our pleasures.—Ascending an eminence, rendered inviting by a pleasant arbour on its summit, my foot slipped, and, that instant—O, my Carolina! my heart yet glows with the fiction!—I found myself in the arms of the best of women, my dear mother; whilst Albert, with smiles, seemed to wait our approach in the arbour.—She embraced us tenderly. I was lost in ecstacy. Throwing my arms round Albert's neck, and bathing his bosom with tears of joy, “Albert I said, “I am thine indeed!”—With sweet mildness, my mother blessed us: “Be faithful, and be happy!—Remember,” she said “always remember.

“ When lovers swear true faith, the listening angels
Stand on the golden battlements of heaven,
And waft their vows to the eternal throne.”

I fancied we quitted the harbour, and that, casting my eyes towards Walheim, I beheld Werter, pale, and with tears, passing through the grove of lime-trees.— Turning to speak, the sudden disappearance of that dearest of women, and of Albert, awoke me.—

Yet even this, my Carolina fictitious as it is, made me happy. To feel my heart throb with joy, though in a dream, is now a luxury to Charlotte !

LETTER LIX.

HAPPY they whose ill-fortune extends not to their friends!—whose sufferings do not wound the peace of those they love best!—But love shares our woes, and gives a double bitterness to misery. My dear, dear Carolina, do not let my misfortunes ruin the tranquillity of thy mind: do not, my dearest girl, suffer with me:—pity, and comfort me.

And comfort, Carolina, will be a welcome guest; surely it will come with Carolina and Theresa. Albert is gone his journey. Alone, and melancholy, how could I sustain new sorrow?—how could I bear additional calamity, and live to tell thee, my Carolina, that Henry—I know thou wilt turn pale—poor Henry is no more!

In his wanderings—wretched wanderer that he was!—he strayed through a neighbouring village afflicted with an

endemia! fever; he became infected, and was ill some days. As his strength decayed, his mind returned. He talked of Charlotte:—he inquired after my dear mother, who always treated him with kindness; he was told she was dead!—He wrung his hands, and cried like a child. —“ But Charlotte,” he said, “ Charlotte is alive.”—His poor mother—unhappy, unthinking woman!—said, “ Charlotte is married to Albert.”—His cries instantly ceased; with wildness in his eyes; and raising his folded hands, he sunk in his mother’s arms and expired.

This day the earth received his remains: accidentally going into one of the back chambers, I saw at a distance the melancholy procession: my heart turned cold—I wished to avoid the sight, but could not move.* My eyes were filled with

* Funerals in Germany, are usually attended by all the relatives of the deceased, besides friends, sometimes forming a procession of eighty or a hundred people, uniformly clad in mourning cloaks.

tears, and yet I gazed and saw the train of mourners, through the branches of the trees, covered with snow, and shaken with chilling blasts : the wind was high, and conveyed to my ears the mournful notes of the funeral psalm, which they sung as they moved along ; sometimes by a sudden gust of wind, I heard the faint sound of the distant bell.—When they came opposite the lodge, for a moment, every eye was turned towards the wretched mansion of Charlotte.—Alone, and terrified, I sunk on my knees : I lifted my streaming eyes to heaven, but I could not speak—God saw my sorrows and pitied me : he took from my mind the poignancy of grief.—I arose, and my eyes once more wandered after the sad spectacle. At a distance from the rest, I saw a young man, with folded arms, his loose hair streaming in the wind, and his eyes fixed on the earth, following, with pensive steps, the sorrowful procession. From Theresa's description, I knew it was the unhappy Antonine, who, feeling what it

is to love, and be deserted, perhaps envies the everlasting peace of Henry !—For thy peace, melancholy youth ! is to be envied by all who know not the felicity of a mind at ease.—Thy poor distracted brain no longer dwells on real or fancied misery : thy heart no longer beats with unnutterable feelings ; thou hast found a cure for all affliction :

“ Death ends thy woe,
And the kind grave shuts up the mournful scene.”

O my Carolina ! there is an anguish in my mind which I will not—cannot describe to thee : must I communicate nothing but sorrow ? Surely Albert’s return will give relief to my heart. Adieu ! my dearest friend, my kind Carolina, adieu !

LETTER LX.

CHANCE—no, it is not chance, for what, —Father of lights !—what has chance to do in a world governed by thy providence? No : it is thy will that Charlotte should suffer ; that one woe should succeed another, as clouds follow clouds, and gather into storms—but let thy goodness disperse them—mercifully disperse them, before they overwhelm me !

A few hours after I had seen the melancholy spectacle of Henry's funeral, my mind had become, in some degree, calm ; and in the evening, I sat musing on the vicissitudes to which even a life of retirement is exposed. I thought on Werter : I recalled to my mind past scenes ; and lamented the fate of an attachment from which I promised myself the pleasures of an innocent friendship.—I felt, deeply felt, for the anxiety of Albert, who,

in his absence, might think too much of Werter, when—to my inexpressible astonishment—I heard the voice of Werter on the stairs!—It was too late to be denied. I was distressed, and reproved him. For some minutes, I knew not what to do; at last I sent to desire Sophia Andran, to come and sit with me; she had company. I sent to others, but before the servant returned, it rained violently. I then thought of calling in my maid; but, conscious of my own innocence, and ashamed to take so unusual a step, I sat down to my harpsichord, and, after playing a few minutes, to prevent Werter entering into conversation, I desired him to read something, and gave him his own translation of Ossian. I saw his heart was full; and the passage he read affected me to tears. It conveyed an idea of our mutual sufferings. Werter seized my hand, and kissed it with an agitation that made me tremble.—I desired him to proceed with the poem: “To morrow,” he read, “shall the traveller come; he that saw me in my beauty

shall come : his eyes will search the field, but they will not find me.”—The heart of Werter sunk at these words : a torrent of tears ran down his cheeks ; he threw himself at my feet, and whilst his whole frame shook, he put my hands against his forehead.—Horror, instantly converted into pity, seized me ; my heart told me his fatal resolution : a thousand sensations arose in my bosom—fear—pity, was predominant : —trembling, I sunk in his arms ;—for the first time, these lips met the lips of Werter. The ardour of his embrace recalled my bewildered senses : “ Werter !” I said, with a tremulous accent—but he pressed me to his bosom ;—raising myself, and turning my face from him, the picture of my dear mother met my eyes. The full idea of virtue rushed into my mind : I was instantly collected, and, with a determined tone, I repeated, “ Werter !”—He fell on his knee before me.—O Carolina ! what emotions at that moment, filled my torn bosom !—at that moment, at once pitying

and resenting, I pronounced the words of eternal separation!—"This is the last time!—Werter; you will never see me more!"—My heart bled, Carolina, as I spoke the words—I spoke them, and, with a last look, flew into my room.

O, my Carolina! what a night of terror and distress!—How did my heart beat when I heard the door shut after Werter!—the rain poured; and the dreadful idea he had raised in my mind—my imagination presented such fearful images!—It was in vain to seek repose: a thousand recollections kept me awake. A new sensation pervaded my bosom—yes, my Carolina, I felt a friendship too tender for Werter: and, for the first time, I dreaded the looks of Albert.

Long and dismal was the night; my hurried fancy was filled with sad ideas:—the new-made grave of Henry;—the floods of water that Werter, in despair must pass in his gloomy road to Walheim!—At one moment the fervour of his kisses thrilled through my heart, whilst

blushes burned my cheeks:—the next, my veins ran cold, when I thought I heard his sighs in the howling wind, that almost shook the Lodge.—To add to my grief, the morning light promised no comfort. At length sleep came to my relief; short sleep disturbed my gloomy visions; but in the morning, my spirits wearied out, sunk in repose; and I was but just arisen when Albert returned.

LETTER LXI.

WHAT dreadful lives, alas ! must they lead, my Carolina, who have feelings to hide, and from those that love them most ! —I was alarmed, lest Albert should discover sadness in my eyes, and tried to receive him with a glow of ecstasy : he was cool, and when he asked me who I had seen, I said, “ Werter spent an hour here yesterday.” —Going into his own room, he replied, “ He chooses his time well.” —It stung me to the heart ; and, for a moment, I felt an emotion something allied to resentment ; but then I recollected, how good, how gentle, how steady—all the amiable qualities of my dear Albert, filled my mind, and, taking my work, I followed, and asked him whether he wanted any thing ; he said, “ No,” and began to write. It was painful to hide my tears. I suffered enough ; but to complete my wretchedness, Werter’s boy came with a fatal message :—“ Give him

the pistols," Albert said.—I started—my heart died away—my blood ran cold.—O Carolina! how did my trembling limbs support me?—I took down the deadly instruments—Freezing with horror, I stood wiping off the dust: long, long should I have stood, had not the eye of Albert—With tears, I gave them the poor boy, who seemed to wonder, and pity my distress.

I gave the fatal instruments!—Cruel, cruel Charlotte! what hast thou done!—Why did I not fall at Albert's feet, and tell him all I knew?—"Give him the pistols!"—O Albert! I heard, and I obeyed thee!—"For a journey!"—Were then my words prophetic?—and shall I never see thee more?—"Give him the pistols!"—Carolina! my heart is marble!—"Give him the pistols!"—Death was in the word—and yet I live!—No comforter, no Carolina—no Theresa with me; I sent for Sophia Selftadt to dine with me—"Werter," she said "is a stranger of late."—Albert replied, "He is gone a journey."—The tear stood in my eye. I

silently heard Sophia speak of his accomplishments.—Poor girl! she knew not that every word went to my heart!—

And now, dearest, best of friends! my mind forebodes dreadful calamities!—I know not when I shall write to thee again. Pray for me, Carolina—pray for Werter:—I see him, Carolina, I see him take the fatal arms from the innocent boy; I hear him ask who delivered them:—yes, he kisses them as the last gift of Charlotte!—

I fear, Carolina, thou canst not read what I now write—my tears blot the paper—and thine will fall on my ill-omened words.—I cannot write any more to thee;—without any one to comfort or assist me, my heart sinks; my hand is feeble.—Recollect, my dearest Carolina, all the scenes of our youth:—remember Charlotte always loved thee. My hand fails me—adieu! adieu!—I send thee Werter's picture—Is it a crime to kiss it before it leaves me?—I send thee a thousand kisses, Carolina—thou wilt find them warm on Werter's picture.—O Carolina, farewell!—God for ever bless thee!

LETTER LXII.

BE not alarmed, my dearest Carolina—the pen is Theresa's, but the words are Charlotte's. Hasten, dear girl, to join with Theresa, in comforting Charlotte.—Yes, my Carolina, Charlotte lives to mourn the death of Werter!—The fatal moment is past!—our hopes and fears are in the grave!

He is no more, Carolina!—Werter—he whom we all admired: whom Charlotte now may love, and whose memory, whilst remembrance is her's, will be dear to her—that unhappy Werter is no more!

I went to bed early last night: sorrow pressed heavy on me; a dream awoke me—I heard the clock strike twelve—O power of sympathy!—my heart was suddenly chilled—I thought the cold hand of Werter beckoned me!—I shrieked: Albert started from his sleep, “What

cry is that!" he said; I was afraid to speak: I counterfeited sleep—for, hard as is the task, Charlotte has learned to counterfeit—I counted the dark hours till six, when it was yet dark;—the gate-bell rung—horror shook me: "Albert!" I said, "Albert!—the bell!"—He instantly arose, and, putting on his night-gown, descended. Half-dressed,—my heart throbbing with unutterable feelings—I followed.—The sight of Werter's boy in tears, surrounded by the astonished servants, shocked me: Trembling I took hold of Albert's arm—"O my master, my dear master!"—I heard no more; Albert's arm could not support me: I fell—

O Carolina! in this insensibility I shared the peace of Werter:—my spirit fled!—I know not what passed, till in the evening, I found Theresa by my bed-side, reading the last letter of Werter.—I wish—but I dare not hear it read.

Heaven, my Carolina, is yet merciful: it has spared my life to comfort Albert, who knows, and is convinced—too fatally

convinced—of Charlotte's true faith. I shall live, I hope, to accomplish the last commands of my dear mother ;—I will see her children clothed and fed—I will teach the sweet infants all that I know : all that she taught Charlotte ; but whilst I am thus—Carolina and Theresa must assist me.

For whatever wise purposes God has thus afflicted me—he has given me power again to address his throne—I am thankful and submissive.—Hasten to us, Carolina : let Charlotte once more embrace her friend.

LETTER LXIII.

I HAVE heard his last letter ! I have wept over every endearing recollection : Albert joined his tears with mine ; he will build a tomb to perpetuate the memory of Werter's love to Charlotte ; for though it was excessive, it was virtuous.

The dear children kneel around my bed. They lift up their little hands, and pray for Charlotte—"The black men must not take Charlotte :—Papa and Mr. Werter will kill the black men that carried mama away."—Dear, dear innocents !—fear no black men : those angels whom you most resemble, will protect you !

O, Werter !—why do you call to my remembrance the scenes that are past !—In vain shall I look for you in the valley ! What will it avail, in a summer's evening, to walk towards the mountains, or

repose me under the elms?—Shall I see your spirit in the pale clouds, or hear your voice in the passing winds?—Alas! the evening shadows will terrify me!—Suddenly emerging from behind the clouds, the glimmerings of moon-light will startle me!

O, Werter!—was it not cruel, for ever thus to wound the peace of Charlotte?—Surely thy love—but despair led thee to the brink—despair taught thee this sad lesson!—

“May my death remove every obstacle to your happiness!”—Death, Werter!—Does it not add to our misery?—Is not Albert unhappy?—Is not Charlotte wretched?—My father weeps over thee! We shall meet no more in the groves of Walheim!—no more shall we see thee musing by the river in the valley!

His last letter recalls to my memory a thousand images of past felicity: they arise before me in constant succession, and add to my grief: they are the shades of departed pleasures—of innocent delights!

“ At the corner of the church-yard, which looks towards the fields, there are two lime trees”—There rest thy remains ! O Werter !—my father lays thee in the appointed place. There will Albert build thy tomb—

But, O my Carolina ! when I think on the last fatal act ! surely I shall dread to approach the grave of him who thus rashly “ broke the golden bowl, and loosed the silver cord.”—

Sure, 'tis a fearful, a tremendous act, precipitately to rush before the awful throne of God ! Not more dreadful would it be for men to behold, at midnight, a rising sun shorn of his beams, spread horror on the earth, than it is for the angelic hosts to see an unsummoned spirit pass the everlasting portals of the heavens, and, unprotected, stand before the grand tribunal !—O Werter ! did no kind cherub pity, and kneel with thee ?—did no friendly angel hide thee with his wings ?—Vain effort, alas ! to hide thee from him “ whose eye views all things at one view !”

If, O heaven! it is not presumption,
let my last prayer be heard for Werter :—
may thy mercy equal Charlotte's pity!

THE END.

T. Gillet, Printer,
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